

HARRIS  
COMICS

# EERIE®



GREATEST HITS





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Stanley Harris

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Dennis S. Page

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER  
& EDITORIAL DIRECTOR  
Meloney Crawford  
Chadwick

RETAIL SALES  
& MARKETING DIRECTOR  
Jonathan Rheingold

ART DIRECTOR  
Michael Chatham

PRODUCTION  
COORDINATOR &  
RETAIL PROMOTION  
Stewart Morales

ASSISTANT EDITOR  
David Bogart

RETAIL SALES ASSISTANT  
Yoshi Aino

EDITORIAL INTERNS  
Mike Mertens  
Seth Biederman

COVER ARTIST  
Kelley Jones

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# SCARY MONSTERS

BY M.C. CHADWICK

One unusual aspect of my childhood was that my family encouraged me to read comics. My grandfather, particularly, felt that superhero comics were an "all-American" form of entertainment and kept me well-supplied with the adventures of his heroes, Superman and Batman. (I imagine the fact that a stack of comics could keep me quietly entertained for hours also represented a cost-effective investment.)

In hindsight, I realize that my playthings were blessedly free of gender-role stereotyping. No one ever admonished me "those aren't for girls." I played with six-shooters and Barbies; I had an Easy-Bake oven and a little set of working carpenter's tools. There was one thing, and one thing only, that was actively prohib-

ited: horror stories, or as they were referred to in our household, "scary stuff."

Now, I should point out that the scary stuff of my childhood wasn't the high-octane level of Freddie or Jason, but much tamer fare: Dracula; the Werewolf; the Creature from the

Black Lagoon (very scary, that one-) as well as the Japanese monsters, Godzilla, Rodan and (my favorite) Mothra. There were also scary comics: DC had tales of science-gone wrong in titles like MY GREATEST ADVENTURE, while in WHERE MONSTERS DWELL Marvel got up-close and personal with guys like Googam, Son of Goom. And then there was the really heavy-duty stuff—CREEPY and EERIE.

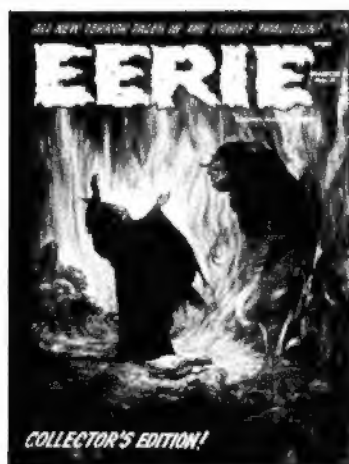
Naturally, the prohibited nature of scary stuff only made it more enticing to me. Occasionally I'd sneak in some unsupervised Saturday afternoon television viewing. ("What's that on TV? Not a scary movie, I hope." "Oh, no.") I'd tag along with my Granddad to the barber shop so I could surreptitiously leaf through old Marvel monster comics and those big black and white comic

magazines. CREEPY. EERIE. Even the logos were scary. The high contrast created by the absence of color made everything seem more haunting, and the stories—oh, my! Ghouls. Conjurings. Sea Monsters. Ghosts. Treachery. Slaughter.

Did I realize then that the pages I leafed through on the sly contained the finest comics work of that time? Nope. While I could tell that Gene Colan pages looked different from Steve Ditko pages, I had yet to develop an awareness of different art styles, to say nothing of an ability to spot them at arm's length.

What I did realize was that these stories scared me silly. While I was unaware of the reputation of the great talent that contributed to the pages of EERIE, the artistry of Archie Goodwin's stories, illustrated by Ditko, Toth, Jones and others made an impact. Who knows what was more distressing: the nightmares that kept me scanning the darkened corners of my room for monsters, or the lectures I received from the adults after expressing my anxieties. ("We told you not to read those scary comics!")

Years later, these are still scary comics, as well a treasury of work by masters of comics art. Enjoy it on either level. And watch out what you tell your kids not to read...after all, I ended up working with scary stuff on a daily basis once I grew up. •





A WARREN MAGAZINE

# EERIE™

**FIRST ISSUE!** FROM THE EDITORS OF  
**CREEPY**

**NO. 1 35¢  
SEPTEMBER**



**SO RARE IT'S FRIGHTENING!** The first issue of EERIE, which was printed as a limited distribution "ashcan edition" and is valued in price guides at \$100 for a genuine, mint condition issue. The cover illustration by Jack Davis was originally designed for the cover of CREEPY #2.



WELCOME TO A WILD BIT OF **WEIRD WIZARDRY** FROM MY **MOLDY MAUSOLEUM** OF MANIACAL MEMORIES! YOU'LL BE MEETING DR. CLIFFORD LOCKE, WHO WEAVES THIS PIECE OF **WITCHCRAFT**... A SPELLBINDER THAT TOUCHES ON THE VERY...

# SOUL OF HORROR!

WARLOCK! WIZARD!  
**DEVIL-WORSHIPPER!**  
WE'RE PUTTING AN  
END TO YOUR UNHOLY  
**WITCHCRAFT!**

STAY BACK, YOU  
PUNY, MORTAL BUMPKINS!  
MY WORK WON'T BE  
STOPPED BY THE  
LIKES OF YOU!





THERE IS A LOCAL SUPERSTITION ABOUT BLACKBIRDS... THEY LIE IN WAIT FOR THE SOULS OF THE DYING, THEIR SCREECHES AND CHATTERING IN TUNE WITH THE LAST BREATH. IF THEY CATCH THE DEPARTING SOUL, THEIR CRIES ECHO THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT, IF NOT...

LISTEN! THEM BIRDS HAVE STOPPED!

JUST FLYIN' AWAY... SIMON HECTATE'S SOUL IS STILL FREE!



ALL THIS I LEARNED LATER. AT THAT SAME MOMENT, AS NEW RESIDENT DOCTOR TO THE AREA, DEATH WASN'T ON MY MIND, BUT **LIFE**... **LEMUEL CATLETT** WAS BEING BORN...

I PLACED THE BABY IN HER ARMS AND STEPPED BACK... FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE MOTHER LOOKED INTO THE SHINY BLACK EYES AND RUDDY FACE OF HER SON...

A BOY, MRS. ATLETT! BIG AND EALTHY!

PLEASE, DR. LOCKE... LET ME LOOK AT HIM...



EEEEEEEE-AAAAGGHHH!!



D-DOCTOR... S-SHE'S... DEAD!



THE TRAGEDY SAT ON ME LIKE A ROCK... MY WORDS OF COMFORT TO THE FATHER CAME FROM A CHOKED THROAT...

I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED ANYTHING LIKE IT... YOU MUST TAKE COMFORT IN THE BOY! HE'S ALL RIGHT... DOING WELL...

YES... I STILL HAVE HAVE... THE BOY...



IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, THE EFFECT OF THE TRAGEDY WAS SOFTENED SOMEWHAT BY INVOLVEMENT IN MY WORK... ALTHOUGH EACH TIME I MADE THE ROUNDS OF THE BACKWOODS COMMUNITY, I'D STOP AT THE CATLETT FARM...



THOUGHT I'D CHECK AND SEE HOW LEMUEL'S DOING...

THE BOY? WHY, HE'S FINE... GROWIN' BIG... STRONG... FAST! NEVER SEEN ANYTHIN' LIKE IT!

AFTER A YEAR, IT BECAME OBVIOUS TO ALL LARCHWICK, LEMUEL WAS NOT NORMAL... VILLAGERS BEGAN STEERING CLEAR OF THE CATLETT PLACE AND IT WAS SAID EVEN ANIMALS SHIED AND BALKED WHEN THE BOY WAS OUT...



I-IT'S FANTASTIC! MOST FIVE-YEAR OLDS AREN'T THIS DEVELOPED!

AN' HE **READS!** ANYTHIN' HE CAN GET HIS HANDS ON... LIKE HE WAS LOOKIN' FOR SUMTHIN'...

THROUGH THE YEARS, LEMUEL'S PHENOMENAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED, INCREASINGLY GROTESQUE... LIKE SOMETHING HUGE STRETCHING A CHILD'S FORM TO MAKE IT FIT! AND LEMUEL WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE CHANGING...



JUST AS LEAVE YOU DIDN'T DROP AROUND ANY MORE, DOC... BOY SAYS VISITORS BOTHER HIM! I'LL CALL IF I NEED YOU...

LORD! CATLETT WAS MY AGE WHEN LEM WAS BORN... BUT **NOW...**

THE YEARS ALSO BROUGHT CHANGES FOR ME... LOVE AND MARRIAGE... THOUGH A TERRIFYING EVENT MARRED MY WEDDING DAY...



BEST COME QUICK, DOC... PA'S DYING... KEEPS ASKIN' FOR YOU...



MY GOD!

GUESS WE'RE TOO LATE...

LEM! YOUR FATHER WAS ONLY **FORTY!** B-BUT THIS DRIED UP SHELL... IT'S LIKE ALL THE LIFE HAS BEEN DRAWN OUT OF HIS BODY...

LISSEN TO THOSE BLACK-BIRDS... SOUNDS LIKE THEY CAUGHT A SOUL FOR SURE!





CATLETT'S FARM LEFT LEM WITH ENOUGH TO LIVE ON! THE RURAL SCHOOLS COULD OFFER HIM NOTHING HE WAS LEFT ALONE, TO HIS AND LARCHWICK'S SATISFACTION TIME PASSED. THEN THE HORRORS BEGAN...

GOOD LORD! YES... YES... I'LL BE RIGHT OVER'



T-THE DOGS ALWAYS (SOB) LOVED HIM! T-TONIGHT WHEN HE WENT... TO FEED THEM (SOB)... THEY WENT CRAZY... TORE AT HIM (SOB) I H-HAD TO SHOOT THEM... TOO LATE!

THE IMAGE OF THE SAVAGELY TORN BODY HUNG IN MY MIND ON THE TRIP HOME, UNTIL A GROTESQUELY FAMILIAR FORM APPEARED AHEAD

LATE TO BE TRAMPING ABOUT THE WOODS, ISN'T IT, LEM?

I LIKE THE WOODS, DOC.. THE DARKNESS AND WILD CREATURES.. BESIDES.. I HAD BUSINESS THERE!



THE NEXT TIME THERE WAS NO NEED TO CALL ME... DEATH CAME SCREAMING RIGHT INTO THE CENTER OF LARCHWICK!



AAAAARRGHHH!

DEAD! PROBABLY FROM SHOCK AS MUCH AS THE STINGING!

NEVER SAW NOTHIN' LIKE IT! ABE KEPT BEES FOR YEARS... NOBODY COULD HANDLE 'EM LIKE HIM!





DON'T LIKE IT! FIRST SAM,  
NOW ABE... THEY WAS BOTH  
WITH US THAT NIGHT 'GAINST  
**SIMON HECATE**... LAWDY,  
I DON'T LIKE IT!



THE HINT OF A PATTERN MADE THE SECOND DEATH  
ALL THE MORE CHILLING... AND WHILE MAKING MY  
ROUNDS, YET ANOTHER PATTERN SEEMED EVIDENT.



IT WAS A BUSY TIME I HAD MY PATIENTS AND MY WIFE  
WAS NOW WITH CHILD, YET SOMEHOW I COULD NOT PUT  
PUT LEMUEL'S WOODLAND WANDERINGS FROM MY MIND ..  
SOMETHING DROVE ME TO CHECK THE AREA HE HAD BEEN  
FREQUENTING ..

A SHACK! THEY'VE SAID  
**SIMON HECATE** LIVED  
SOMEWHERE IN HERE



INSIDE AND OUT, IT WAS A PLACE  
OF ROT AND DECAY... FOUL AIR..  
LACED WITH COBWEBS... STILL IT  
SEEMED TO ME, THE SHACK WAS  
BEING **USED!**

THE FIREPLACE!  
THOSE BRICKS  
LOOK LOOSE!



BEHIND THE BRICKS I FOUND THEM!  
HELLISH VOLUMES SANE MEN LONG AGO  
HAD HOPED WERE DESTROYED... INCANTA-  
TIONS, SPELLS, CHANTS, AND POTIONS...  
DARK BOOKS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EVIL

**THOSE ARE MINE!**  
WHAT RIGHT DO YOU  
HAVE TO BE HERE?  
**WHAT RIGHT?**



THE PINCHED ADULT FACE IN THE MISSHAPEN  
CHILD'S HEAD WAS RED WITH ANGER. THE  
SHINY BLACK EYES GLARED INTO ME. I  
WAS GRIPPED BY A GNAWING FEAR AND  
FLED WITHOUT SAYING A WORD.

STAY AWAY FROM HERE!  
THIS IS **MY** PLACE!  
BEST YOU LEAVE  
ME ALONE!



AGAIN, TIME NUMBED ME... THERE WERE MANY CALLS AND MY WIFE'S CONDITION TO BE CONCERNED WITH. UNEVENTFUL MONTHS PASSED AND I LAUGHED ABOUT MY FEAR ... **THEN...**

THEY WAS WORKIN' SIDE BY SIDE... SEEMED TO GO **INSANE!** STARTED HACKIN' AWAY AT EACH OTHER!



THESE ARE THE LAST **TWO!** ALL THE MEN RUMORED TO HAVE KILLED **SIMON HECATE** ARE... **DEAD!**



**I KNEW WHAT I MUST DO!** IT WAS LATE, BUT THE MOON WAS HIGH AND FULL... I HAD NO TROUBLE FINDING MY WAY TO THE SHACK...

HE'S IN THERE...



LEM? NO... **CALL ME SIMON!**

**STOP!** HAVEN'T YOU DONE ENOUGH, LEM?



NG'GUTH... WINTHURR DJON'T HUN'BLUGH!



Y-YOU... **SIMON HECATE?**

DID YOU THINK THOSE FOOLS KILLED ME? I HAVE THE POWER TO TRANSFER MY SOUL INTO ANY FRESH-BORN INFANT



...I HAVE THE POWER TO STEAL LIFE FROM ANOTHER BODY SO MY OWN INFANT SHELL WILL GROW AND MATURE QUICKLY! AND DOCTOR LOCKE, I HAVE THE POWER TO STRIKE YOU DEAD AS YOU STAND!

R'NERTH...  
ABSLTH...  
GONDAR---



THE HIDEOUS LITTLE MOUTH GRINNED AS IT SPEWED FORTH THE DEADLY SPELL FROM THE FORBIDDEN BOOKS... I STRUCK WITH THE ONLY THING AT MY COMMAND!

I BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS WORLD AND...



WHACK!

...I'LL TAKE YOU OUT!



THE THING I GRAPPLED WITH WAS LESS THAN TEN YEARS OLD, YET HAD THE STRENGTH AND POWER OF A MAN MORE THAN MY EQUAL... LEM NEEDED NO SPELL... HE WAS KILLING ME WITH HIS BARE HANDS!

NO CHANCE...  
UNLESS



CHUK!  
AIEEEEEEE!



OUTSIDE THE BLACKBIRDS WERE SEARCHING VIOLENTLY... THE THING CRUMBLLED AND DECAYED WITH THE DEATH STROKE, NOT LIKE SOMETHING OF LEM'S AGE, BUT AS WOULD THE ANCIENT **SIMON HECATE**, BEHIND ME AS I STAGGERED FROM THE PLACE OF DREAD, A FIRE WAS STARTING





THERE WAS NO SENSE OF VICTORY OR TRIUMPH AS I RAN FROM THE SHACK... ONLY HORROR AND REVULSION! ABOVE ME I COULD HEAR THE BEATING BLACKBIRDS' WINGS AS THEY SILENTLY FLEW AWAY.

IT DOESN'T MATTER! THERE ARE NO NEW-BORN CHILDREN. HIS SOUL IS DOOMED!

SOMEHOW I MADE IT BACK TO LARCH-WICK... TO MY OWN HOME...

DOC! WE'VE LOOKED ALL OVER FOR YOU... YOUR WIFE... THE BABY CAME PREMATURELY!

WE HAD TO GET DOC JONAS FROM GREENFALLS...

HALF-DAZED, I WAS PUSHED INSIDE... FEELING LIKE A MAN IN A DREAM...

I WANT YOU TO KNOW, LOCKE... I DID EVERYTHING I COULD! THINGS SEEMED TO GO WELL... THEN, WHEN IT WAS OVER, SHE... BUT YOU SHOULDN'T THINK OF THAT! TRY TO THINK ABOUT...

...YOUR SON! FINE AND HEALTHY!

I STARED AT THE WRINKLED RED FACE BEFORE ME. HAD MY WIFE SEEN THE SAME HORRORS IN THOSE SPARKLING BLACK EYES AS MRS. CATLETT IN LEM'S? I COULDN'T BE SURE... HE LOOKED BRIGHT AND FINE... YET SOMEWHERE I COULD STILL HEAR A VOICE SAYING: *CALL ME SIMON!*

NO USE KIDDING AROUND (HEH, HEH)... DOC LOCKE'S REALLY GOT A PROBLEM! HOPE HE CAN FIND AN ANSWER... ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT TAKE QUITE A *SPELL* TO GET TO THE SOUL OF THE MATTER!



IT'S WEIRD WESTERN TIME IN THE *EERIE CORRAL*, FEAR FOLLOWERS...  
TAKE A WRITHING RIDE WITH ME ALONG THE TERROR TRAIL WHICH  
WE'LL BE SHARING WITH THE...

# DARK RIDER!



DENVER! QUIT GAWKIN'! WE  
GOTTA MAKE IT THROUGH THE  
MOUNTAINS 'FORE THE SNOW  
GETS TOO HEAVY... YOU  
BEEN SKITTISH AS A COLT  
SINCE WE LEFT THE  
PROSPECTOR!

ALL DAY LONG I'VE  
HAD A FEELIN'...  
LIKE WE WAS BEIN'  
FOLLOWED...

SEVERIN

THE DAY HAD BEEN  
BORN DARK AND  
BLEAK, A CONSTANT  
TWILIGHT... NOW  
THE MOUNTAIN WIND  
ROSE, WHISTLING  
AND BITING AT  
THE BACKS OF  
THE THREE HORSE-  
MEN CARRYING  
WITH IT THE FIRST  
FLAKES OF FALLING  
SNOW TO HAMPER  
AND OBSCURE  
VISION...

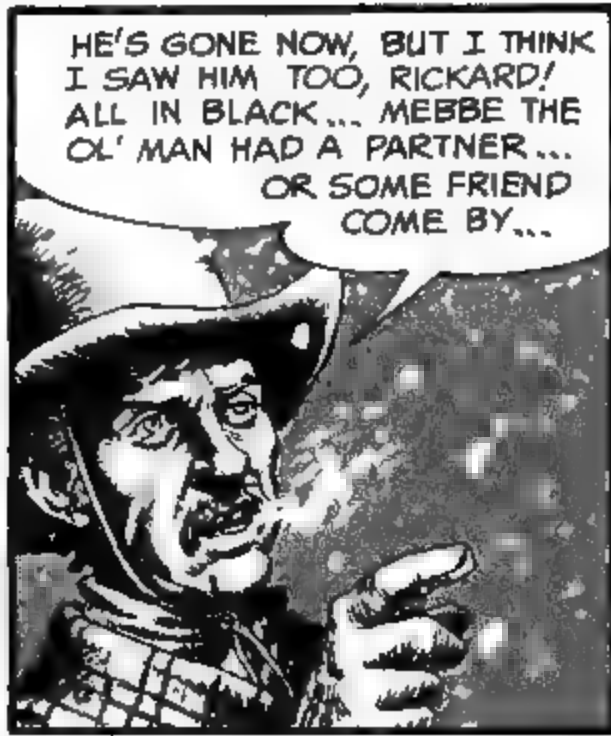


THERE! UP ON  
THE RIDGE...  
A RIDER!

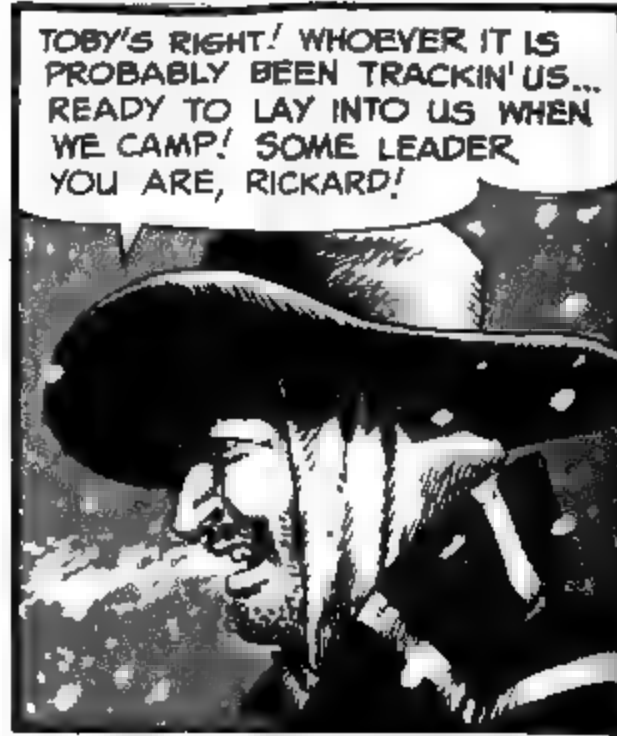




WHERE? I DON'T SEE NOTHIN' ... **NOTHIN'!** JUST 'CAUSE WE SHOT AN OLD SOUR-DOUGH'S NO CALL TO GO TO PIECES!



HE'S GONE NOW, BUT I THINK I SAW HIM TOO, RICKARD! ALL IN BLACK... MEBBE THE OL' MAN HAD A PARTNER... OR SOME FRIEND COME BY...



TOBY'S RIGHT! WHOEVER IT IS PROBABLY BEEN TRACKIN' US... READY TO LAY INTO US WHEN WE CAMP! SOME LEADER YOU ARE, RICKARD!



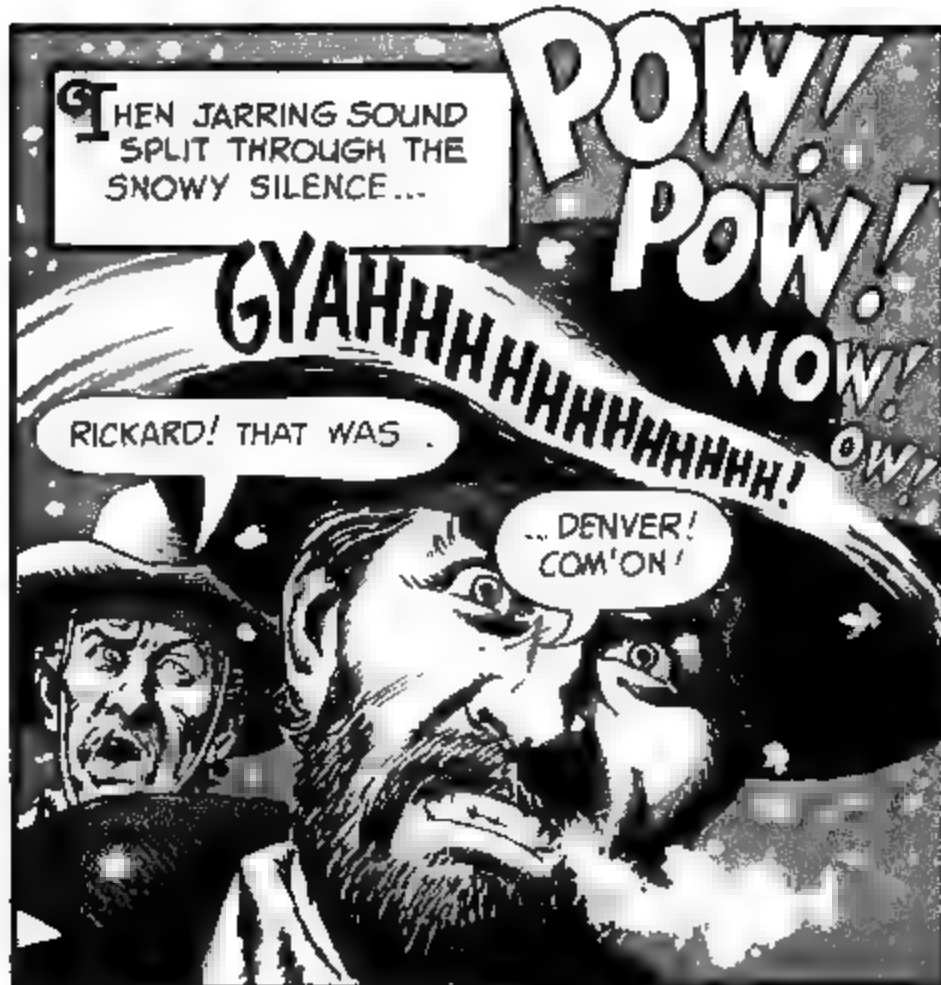
I AIN'T WAITIN' TO BE BACKSHOT! NOT WHILE THERE'S STILL DAYLIGHT TO FLUSH HIM OUT!

DENVER... WAIT! DON'T RIDE OFF HALF-COCKED... DENVER!

RICKARD'S WORDS WERE LOST ON THE WIND LEAVING ONLY THE VAPOR OF HIS BREATH IN THE COLD AIR AS DENVER RODE OUT OF SIGHT. THE FALLING SNOWFLAKES GREW LARGER AND FELL STEADILY...



©\*☆&#//  
FOOL!



THEN JARRING SOUND SPLIT THROUGH THE SNOWY SILENCE...

**POW!**  
**POW!**  
**GYAHHHHHHHHHH!**  
**WOW!**  
**OW!**

RICKARD! THAT WAS

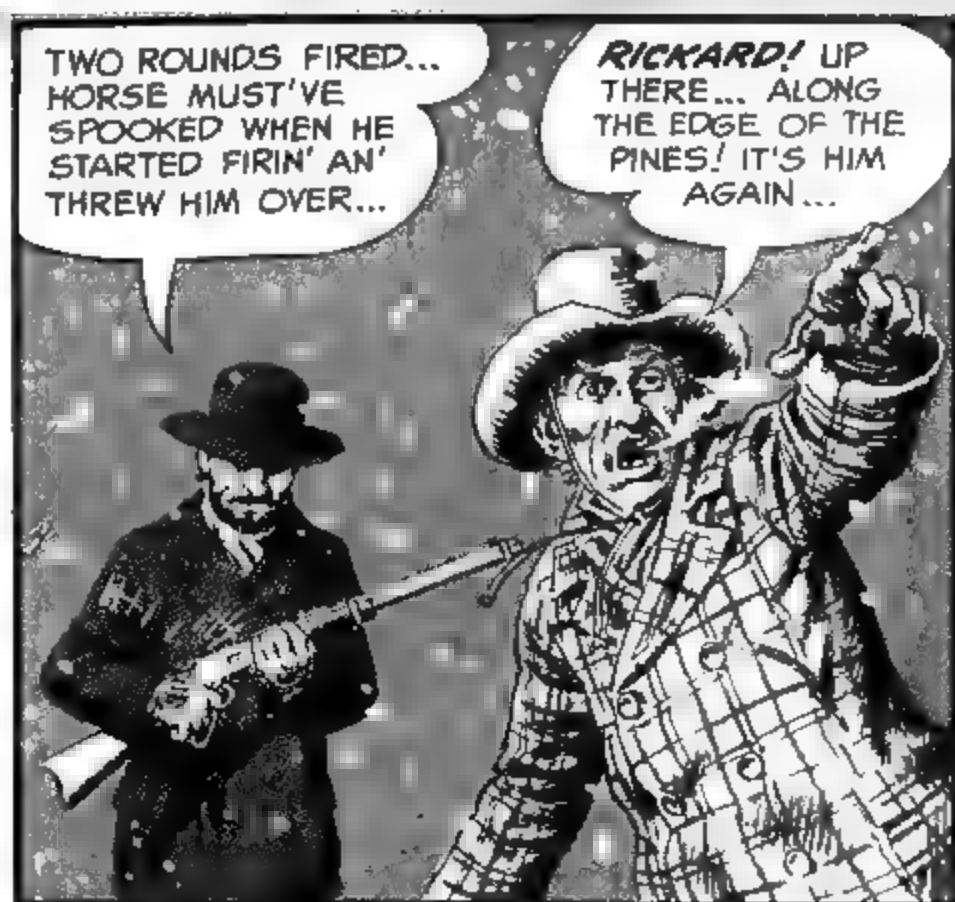
... DENVER!  
COM'ON!

CAUTIOUSLY, THE TWO MEN URGED THEIR MOUNTS OVER ROCK AND SNOW, SEEKING THE TRUE DIRECTION OF THE SCREAM NOW ECHOING THROUGHOUT THE SURROUNDING PEAKS!



THAT'S HIS HORSE, BUT WHERE...





BOTH MEN PUSHED THEIR MOUNTS HARD OVER THE WINDING, SLIPPERY TREACHERY OF THE NARROW MOUNTAIN TRAIL, UP AND DOWN THROUGH HIGH DANGEROUS STRETCHES AND LOW SHELTERED AREAS...

THIS'LL KEEP US OUTTA THE BLASTED SNOW FOR A WHILE, NOT DRIFTING NEARLY AS BAD IN HERE...

NEVER DID LIKE IT IN THIS HIGH TIMBER... SUMPTIN' SPOOKY 'BOUT THE WAY THE LIGHT FILTERS THROUGH THE TREES AND...



I-IT'S HIM! RICKARD, HE GOT AHEAD OF US... CUT US OFF!

IT AIN'T POSSIBLE IT...



WITH A CRY, TOBY SUDDENLY PUT THE SPURS TO HIS HORSE, CHARGING FORWARD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...

I'VE HAD ENOUGH CAT 'N' MOUSE! LET'S SETTLE THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

TOBY! DON'T DO IT... REMEMBER DENVER...



TOBY WAS OUT OF SIGHT BEFORE RICKARD COULD FINISH SHOUTING. IT WAS ALL HE COULD DO TO FOLLOW THE CRASHING SOUND OF TOBY'S HORSE AS IT RACED THROUGH THE TIMBER, UNTIL...

AIIII-ARGHHH!

TOBY!



TOBY? HEY, YOU SILLY @☆&\*, WHAT HAPP...



LORD!

SHOULDN'T OF TRIED RUNNIN' THROUGH THIS TIMBER... FORK CAUGHT HIM JUST RIGHT... KNOCKED HIM OFF THE HORSE AN' BROKE HIS NECK LIKE A HANGMAN'S ROPE!





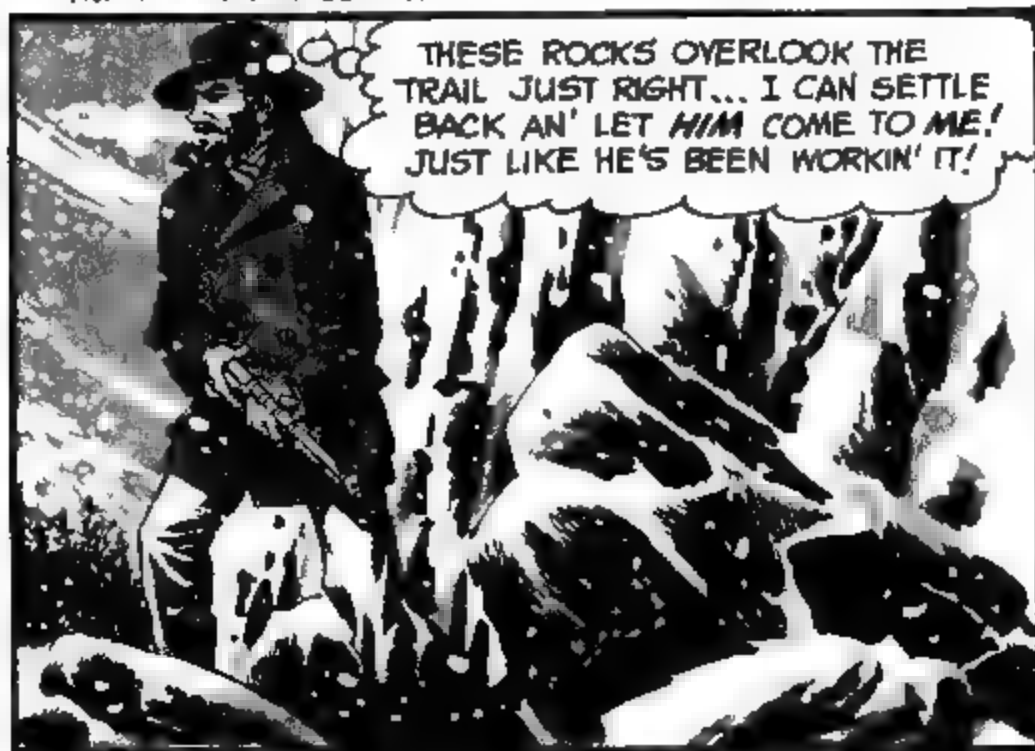
SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE, RICKARD THOUGHT HE HEARD THE SNORT OF A HORSE, AND...



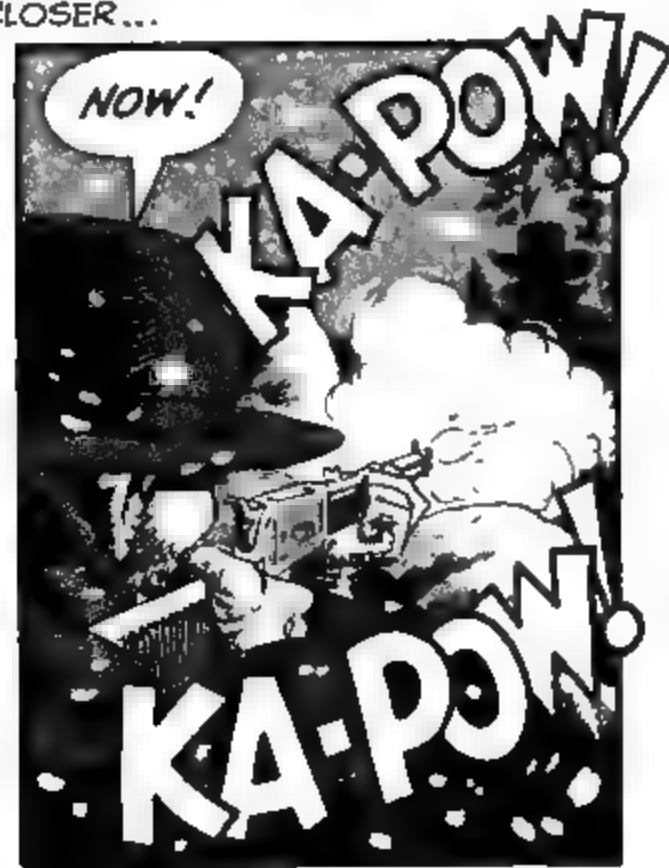
RICKARD PLUNGED OUT OF THE TIMBERLAND, BACK TO THE ICY DESOLATION OF THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL, DETERMINED TO LEAVE BEHIND THE PERSISTENT RIDER IN BLACK... ONLY TO BE TORTURED EACH STEP OF THE WAY BY THOUGHTS OF HIS DOGGED PURSUER...



DISMOUNTING, RICKARD SENT HIS HORSE ON ALONG THE TRAIL WITH A SLAP...



FROM THE DISTANCE CAME THE SLOW ECHOING CLATTER OF A LONE HORSE'S HOOVES... WOOD AND METAL OF THE RIFLE WERE LIKE ICE, BUT RICKARD'S PALMS WERE MOIST WITH SWEAT... THE INSIDE OF HIS MOUTH WAS LIKE COTTON AS HE LINED UP THE TARGET COMING CLOSER AND CLOSER...





THE SOUND OF THE RIFLE FIRE REBOUNDED OFF THE SURROUNDING CLIFFS GROWING TO A ROAR OF CANNONS AND ANSWERED BY ANOTHER ROAR EVEN MORE TERRIBLE...



OH, NO... NO... GOD, NO! THE NOISE FROM THE RIFLE... IT'S CAUSING A... A...



IN TIME, THE SOUND FADED. RICKARD LAY WITH THE WEIGHT OF A MOUNTAIN ON HIM... BREATH, LIKE LIFE, SQUEEZING OUT OF HIS NUMB BODY... THROUGH BLURRED, TORTURED EYES, HE SENSED A DARK FIGURE DISMOUNTING, MOVING NEARER...



AFTER... ALL... THIS... I STILL... DIDN'T... GET...

YOU COULD NEVER GET ME, RICKARD!



WHY...? WHO ARE... YOU...? TELL ME... PLEASE... I'M... I'M DYING...

OF COURSE, RICKARD, IT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD FIND OUT...



...FOR I AM... DEATH!

LOOKS LIKE RICKARD FOUND A HOME ON THE RANGE... PERMANENTLY! JUST AS WELL, RIDING AROUND IN ALL THAT SNOW MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE DEATH OF THEM ANYWAY! HEE HEE!



SO WE MEET AGAIN! HEE HEE HEE! I KNEW YOU COULDN'T KEEP FROM JOINING ME IN ANOTHER **MONSTROUS MESS OF MURDEROUS MAYHEM!** THE **COMPULSION FOR REVULSION** IS MUCH TOO STRONG FOR US TO BE ABLE TO IGNORE THE CALL FROM THE WORLD OF DARKNESS! SO ON THIS, ER, RATHER DREARY OCCASION, ALLOW ME TO PRESENT A **WOEFUL TALE OF WITCHCRAFT**, A SUBJECT THAT SOME CALL FACT, AND SOME CALL FANCY, BUT .HEE HEE. PERHAPS I SHOULD LET **YOU** BE THE **JUDGE!**

# TRIAL BY FIRE!



HEAR ME, YE UNHOLY POWERS OF THE NIGHT! AWAKEN TO MY CALL! GIVE TO ME THE STRENGTH AND POWER TO AVENGE MY ANCESTORS, FOR THE TIME IS **NOW!**



FOR YOU, JUDGE HARKER, THE END IS NEAR, FOR YOU ARE KIN TO THE FIRST JUDGE HARKER WHO BURNED **MY** ANCESTORS TO PURGE THEM OF **WITCHCRAFT!** FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD, REVENGE UPON **ALL** THE WITCH-BURNING JUDGE HARKERS SHALL BE METED OUT TO **YOU!**



**REGA FLEXIS MUR!**

THE SCENE IS A SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN. THE TIME IS THE PRESENT. JUDGE ALFRED HARKER IS IN THE MIDST OF A TIGHTLY-CONTESTED POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, AND THIS NIGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF HIS DOWNFALL.

...SO AGAIN LET ME REMIND YOU, AS A JUDGE OF LONG-STANDING, WHOSE HERITAGE INCLUDES SOME OF THE MOST FAMOUS...

**HANG IT ALL, JUDGE!** WE *KNOW* YOUR ANCESTORS BURNED WITCHES! THAT'S ALL YOU EVER *TALK* ABOUT! WE WANT TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR POLITICAL BELIEFS, NOT YOUR FAMILY TREE!



**HMPF!** WELL, MY FRIEND, YOU MAY THINK YOUR INSULT IS WELL TAKEN, BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE SUCH AS YOU WHO DISREGARD THE *IMPORTANCE* OF ANCESTRY! CONSEQUENTLY...

...**REGA FLEXIS MUR!**

THE STRANGE WORDS HAD AN EVEN MORE STRANGE EFFECT! AT ONCE, THE CROWD BECAME SILENT, THE JUDGE, SOMEWHAT BEFUZZLED, STRUGGLED INWARDLY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE HAD SAID. FOR ONE VERY BRIEF MOMENT IN TIME, NOTHING HAPPENED...



...AND THEN THE JUDGE'S HECKLER TOPPLED OVER... **DEAD!**

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! EVERYONE STAND BACK! GIVE THE DOC ROOM!

HE'S DEAD, CHIEF! HEART ATTACK, I'D SAY!

HEART ATTACK?

OH, YEAH? IF YOU ASK *ME*, THE JUDGE USED HIS *OWN* BRAND OF WITCHCRAFT!





URGED ON BY THE JUDGE'S POLITICAL OPPONENTS WHO KEPT THE SUBJECT OF WITCHCRAFT BLAZING, THE NEWSPAPERS AND THE TOWNSPEOPLE TAUNTED HIM MERCILESSLY...

...AND NOW, IF ANY OF YOU GOOD PEOPLE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS...

JUDGE HARKER, IN VIEW OF YOUR **NOBLE** BACKGROUND AND ANCESTRY, I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHICH WITCHES YOU INTEND TO BURN FIRST... **IF** YOU'RE ELECTED!

I KNOW YOU, COUNCILMAN DAVIS! YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO BAIT AND RIDICULE ME TO FURTHER THE CAUSE OF YOUR **OWN** CANDIDATE! WELL, LET ME TELL YOU THIS...



REGA FLEXIS MUR!



REGA FLEXIS MUR!

JUDGE HARKER WAS UNABLE TO BELIEVE HIS OWN EARS! HE HAD HAD NO INTENTION OF MOUTHING THOSE RIDICULOUS WORDS, YET HE HAD DONE SO, AND EVERYONE HAD HEARD. COUNCILMAN DAVIS STAGGERED.. AND FELL!



HE DID IT AGAIN!

JUDGE HARKER CAST A SPELL!

HE **IS** USING WITCHCRAFT!

THE CROWD ROARED ITS ANGER. INSULTS AND THREATS CASCADED AGAINST JUDGE HARKER'S EARS AS HIS FRIENDS QUICKLY HUSTLED HIM OUT OF THE AUDITORIUM...

YOU'RE A **FOOL**, HARKER! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO... RUIN US **ALL**?

I...I'M SORRY... I DON'T KNOW WHAT MADE ME ... SAY IT...



WHEN WE ASKED YOU TO RUN ON OUR TICKET, WE DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO ACT **THIS** WAY! YOU REALIZE YOU'RE SETTING THE WHOLE TOWN **AGAINST** US!

IF **YOU** WANT TO LOSE EVERYTHING, THAT'S **YOUR** BUSINESS, BUT IF YOU COME UP WITH ANY MORE OF THAT WITCHCRAFT BUNK, WE'LL CHUCK YOU OUT IN THE COLD!



GENTLEMEN, PLEASE... I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING. I'M SO CONFUSED... HAVEN'T SLEPT IN DAYS... SOMEONE... SOMETHING... I... I JUST DON'T KNOW!

WELL, YOU'D BETTER KNOW BY TOMORROW NIGHT! YOU HAVE A PUBLIC DEBATE WITH YOUR OPPONENT SCHEDULED! IF YOU DON'T MAKE A GOOD SHOWING AND COME OUT A WINNER, YOU'RE **THROUGH**!



THE CAR DEPOSITED JUDGE HARKER BEFORE HIS HOME AND DROVE OFF. AS HE CLIMBED THE STEPS TO THE FRONT DOOR, HE FELT HE HAD AGED A HUNDREDFOLD...

GILDA? GILDA... I'M... I'M HOME...

YES, ALFRED... AND HOW DID IT GO TONIGHT?



TERRIBLE!... TERRIBLE! IT HAPPENED AGAIN, GILDA. I DON'T KNOW HOW, OR WHY... BUT IT HAPPENED AGAIN...

DON'T FRET ABOUT IT, ALFRED DEAR... I'M SURE THINGS... COULD BE WORSE!



WEARILY, THE JUDGE RETIRED TO BED WHERE HE SLEPT FITFULLY. DURING THE FOLLOWING DAY HE SPENT EVERY MINUTE IN FEVERISH PREPARATION, AND WHEN, THAT EVENING, HE STRODE UPON THE PLATFORM TO FACE HIS OPPONENT, HE FELT READY.. EVEN THOUGH HIS HAND TREMBLED...



.. AND IN THE BASEMENT OF HIS HOME, HIS WIFE GILDA WAS ALSO READY...



THE DEBATE STARTED PEACEFULLY ENOUGH, BUT SOON GREW IN INTENSITY, FOR THE JUDGE KNEW HOW MUCH DEPENDED ON THE OUTCOME. HIS OPPONENT KNEW THAT HE, TOO, WAS ON THE VERGE OF SUCCESS. IF HE COULD MAKE THE JUDGE COMMIT ONE MISTAKE...



THE MOMENT THE WORDS SPRANG FROM HIS LIPS, THE JUDGE KNEW ALL WAS LOST. HE STAGGERED BACKWARD... THE CROWD WAS SUDDENLY RAISED TO FEVER PITCH... AND THE JUDGE'S OPPONENT FELL **DEAD!**



NOT FAR AWAY, THE JUDGE'S WIFE HURRIED TO THE FRONT DOOR TO ANSWER A FRANTIC KNOCKING...



DEEP IN THE BLACKNESS OF HER HEART, GILDA HARKER KNEW THAT HER REVENGE WAS ALMOST COMPLETE! SHE WANTED VERY MUCH TO SEE THE JUDGE BURN... TO SEE THE FINAL ACT... AND PRETENDING CONCERN FOR HIM, SHE RUSHED TOWARD THE SQUARE...



IN THE SQUARE, THE MOB SURGED UNCONTROLLED! THE JUDGE IS ROUGHLY THROWN UP AGAINST A PILLAR... CORDS WRAPPED HURRIEDLY AROUND HIM...



WOOD, GARBAGE, CLOTHING... ANYTHING THAT WILL BURN IS THROWN AT HIS FEET! HIS PLEAS GO UNHEARD, HIS PRAYERS UNANSWERED. THEN, THE KEROSENE...





...AND THE MATCH!

LET ME  
THROUGH! LET  
ME THROUGH!



GILDA HARKER BURST INTO THE FOREFRONT OF THE CROWD AND GAZED WITH GLOATING SATISFACTION AT THE PYRE... BUT TO HER AUDIENCE SHE PRESENTED A DIFFERENT EMOTION...

STOP! YOU FIENDS! HELP  
HIM! DON'T LET HIM DIE!  
HELP HIM!



BUT AS SHE ENACTS HER ROLE, THE FLAMES BURN THROUGH THE BONDS ENCIRCLING THE DYING JUDGE, AND BY SOME REMOTE HAND, HE LURCHES FORWARD, FALLING HEAVILY UPON HIS WIFE...



TOGETHER, IN A FLAMING, TUMBLING MASS, THEY FALL TO THE GROUND. THE SICKENING THUD OF HER HEAD STRIKING PAVEMENT IS HEARD...AND THE CROWD GASPS AND DRAWS BACK AS FROM HER NOW BURNING BODY ISSUE THE DEMONS THAT RULED HER SOUL!



WHEN AT LAST THE FLAMES HAD DISAPPEARED AND THE PEOPLE DREW NEAR THE WARM WISPS OF SMOKE TRAILING UPWARD, THEY SAW THAT THE JUDGE, THOUGH DEAD, WAS BURNED NOT AT ALL, WHILE THE EVIL REMAINS OF HIS WIFE GILDA WERE NOTHING BUT ASHES. IN PROVING HIS INNOCENCE, JUDGE HARKER HAD FULFILLED HIS DESTINY...AND BURNED A WITCH!



HEE, HEE! **WITCH**  
JUST GOES TO PROVE  
YOU CAN'T TRUST  
**ANYBODY!** SO DON'T  
BURN ANY WITCHES,  
GANG! THE LIFE YOU  
SAVE MAY BE YOUR  
**MOTHER-IN-LAW!**  
HEE HEE HEE!



**PROLOGUE:** THE TWO DOCTORS STARED CALMLY AS THE PATIENT RAVED AND STRUGGLED UNDER THE GRIP OF HIS GUARD... THEY WERE USED TO SHOUTING AND SCREAMING, CRYING AND LAUGHING... IT WAS TO BE EXPECTED... IT WAS THAT KIND OF PLACE... IT WAS AN...  
**INSANE ASYLUM!**



**NO WATER! KEEP IT AWAY FROM ME! I'VE WARNED YOU! WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN?!**

**CRASH**



HE HASN'T RESPONDED TO ANY KIND OF TREATMENT... COMPLETELY HOSTILE AND AGGRESSIVE! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO TRY...


**I'M NOT INSANE! IT'S ALL TRUE! WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!**



**DON'T DO THIS! IT'S THE OLD MAN'S FAULT! HE GOT MY BROTHER AND ME INTO IT! HE DID IT... THE OLD MAN!**

**SHOCK THERAPY**





NOW THAT OUR *PULSATING PROLOGUE* IS OVER, LET'S FIND OUT WHAT THE SHOUTING IS ALL ABOUT... *BERT CAME* IS GOING TO TELL YOU OF THE *HORRIFIC HAPPENINGS* ON THE OCEAN FLOOR THAT DROVE HIM INTO THE BOOBY HATCH AND LEFT HIM WITH A BAD CASE OF...

# FULL FATHOM FRIGHT

SAM AND  
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET THE  
OLD MAN CHARTER OUR BOAT OR OUR  
SERVICES... WE COULD HAVE GONE ON BEING  
BEACH BUMS, SCRAPING OUT A LIVING... BUT WE  
DIDN'T! WE WERE TOO EAGER... AND *GREEDY!*

THE OLD MAN WASN'T  
NUTS! IT'S DOWN HERE  
... JUST LIKE  
HE SAID!



Gene  
Colan



IT'S DOWN THERE! AND THE CHEST IS INSIDE!  
IT'LL TAKE SAM AND I BOTH TO GET IT OUT!

CHEST GIVES  
OFF A FUNNY GLOW...LIGHTS  
UP THE INNER HULL OF THE  
WRECK...KINDA SPOOKY!  
MUST BE PHOSPHORUS!

HIM AND  
THAT BOOK...**THAT BLASTED  
OLD BOOK**...WITH ITS HAND-  
SCRAWLED PAGES...ANCIENT AND EVIL...

JUST AS THE BOOK  
SAID! YOU  
**MUST** BRING  
IT UP  
IMMEDIATELY!

MUST BE  
SOMETHIN'  
PRETTY VALUABLE  
IN THAT CHEST...  
MAYBE TREASURE,  
HUH?

VALUABLE?  
BEYOND YOUR WILDEST DREAMS!  
DON'T TRY TO OPEN IT DOWN  
THERE... JUST BRING IT UP  
TO **ME!** I'VE WAITED YEARS FOR  
THIS... IT'S GOING TO BE  
**MINE!** TO DO WITH AS I  
WANT...**MINE!** AFTER CEN-  
TURIES BELOW...

GUESS THAT  
TREASURE WON'T  
BE HIS AFTER  
ALL...

HEY! NOW WE CAN GET  
A LOOK AT THE BOOK...  
SEE HOW HE KNEW ABOUT  
ALL THIS!

WITH THAT  
TREASURE  
CHEST WAITIN'  
BELOW?  
COME ON!

IF ONLY I'D LOOKED AT THE  
BOOK *THEN!* INSTEAD OF  
AFTERWARD WHEN IT WAS  
*TOO LATE!*

ALL WE COULD THINK  
OF WAS GOLD AND  
JEWELS WAITING FOR  
US IN THE ROTTING  
HULL OF THAT SHIP...  
WAITING IN THAT STRANGE  
GLOWING CHEST...

SAM WAS MORE  
ANXIOUS THAN  
I WAS...  
WHEN HE SAW  
THE LIGHT  
COMING FROM  
WITHIN THE  
HULL, HE  
PUSHED ON  
AHEAD...

HE COULDN'T WAIT...  
BEFORE I COULD  
CATCH UP, SAM WAS  
PRYING AT THE LID  
TO THE CHEST...

POOR SAM! HE NEVER GOT TO SEE THE BOOK. .  
NEVER GOT TO KNOW ABOUT THE SHIP AND ITS  
ORIGINAL PASSENGERS... A WEIRD CULT DRIVEN  
OUT OF ENGLAND... DRIVEN OUT FOR WORSHIPPING  
... **DEMONS!**

THE OLD MAN HAD KNOWN! FOUND THE  
BOOK AND BELIEVED... WANTED TO REKINDLE  
THE CULT'S POWER... TO BRING BACK WHAT  
HAD BEEN SHUT IN THE CHEST FOR THE  
CENTURIES SINCE THE SHIP WAS SUNK!

DOWN DEEP  
UNDERWATER THEY CALL IT  
THE SILENT WORLD . BUT WHEN SAM  
OPENED THE CHEST,  
I HEARD A SOUND...  
A LOUD **HORRIBLE SOUND!**



**AWWWRRRRRR**  
**ROWWRRRRR**



THE T-THING TORE INTO SAM AND CAME RUSHING FORWARD TOWARD ME... SOMEHOW MY PETRIFIED FINGERS FOUND THE TRIGGER TO THE SPEAR GUN.



THE WATER BOILED WITH THE CREATURE'S THRASHINGS AS THE SPEAR WENT HOME, THEN TURNED INTO AN INKY BLACK CLOUD... AND OUT OF IT SWIRLED WHAT WAS LEFT OF MY BROTHER!



I CLUTCHED ONTO SAM AND SHOT FOR THE SURFACE, NEVER ONCE LOOKING BACK TO THE DEPTHS BELOW WHERE I KNEW THAT CENTURIES OLD HORROR WAS STILL LOOSE AND RAMPANT!



SOMEHOW I MADE IT TO OUR BOAT... BUT AS I PULLED SAM ABOARD...

SAM! WHAT THE --



OH, MY GOD!



LIKE A WEREWOLF OR VAMPIRE, THE BITE OF THE DEMON HAD BEEN INFECTIOUS... TRANSFORMING SAM! BUT BEING A CREATURE OF THE DEEP, ONE OTHER ELEMENT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE CHANGE: WATER!



COULD I BECOME ONE TOO? THE THING THAT HAD ONCE BEEN MY BROTHER WAS DRAGGING ME NEAR THE SIDE OF THE BOAT TOWARD THE WATER WHEN MY HAND GRASPED COLD STEEL...

IT WAS MY LAST DESPERATE CHANCE! I JERKED THE SPEAR FROM THE OLD MAN'S BODY AND PLUNGED IT INTO THE CREATURE!



WOUNDED AND BLEEDING, I GRASPED THE OLD MAN'S BOOK, THAT VOLUME OF THE CULT HANDED DOWN FOR GENERATIONS, LOOKING FOR ANSWERS... ANSWERS I NOW KNOW ALL TOO WELL!

I WAS STILL READING THE BOOK WHEN THAT AWESOME THING FROM BELOW STRUCK WITH FULL FURY!



**EPILOGUE:** THE PATIENT'S SCREAMING STILL ECHOED IN THE CORRIDORS AS THE DOCTORS CHATTED IN THEIR OFFICE...

COAST GUARD FOUND HIM ATOP A LARGE PIECE OF WRECKAGE... REMARKABLY ENOUGH, HE'D MANAGED TO KEEP DRY...

BUT NOT THIS BOOK! MOST OF THE INK'S BEEN WASHED AWAY...

THE BOOK WAS HARMLESS! GUILT OVER KILLING THE OLD MAN MADE BERT'S MIND CREATE THE DEMON, DROVE HIM TO KILL SAM... IT HAPPENED IN THE **WATER**, HENCE HIS NEUROTIC FEAR WATER WILL TRANSFORM HIM... **IT'S CLASSIC!**

I KNOW... YET I WORRY ABOUT SHOCK THERAPY...

NO NEED TO... IT'S JUST THE STANDARD TREATMENT!

THAT'S WHY I'M UNEASY... THE TREATMENT INCLUDES ELECTROTHERAPY PLUS--

--B- BATHS IN HOT AND COLD WATER!!

**AWWROWRRR**

OOPS! LOOKS LIKE THE DOCS PRESCRIBED THE WRONG TREATMENT! AND THEY THINK THEIR PATIENTS ARE NUTS... ONCE BERT JOINS THEM, THEY'LL PROBABLY **SEA** THEIR MISTAKE! MEANTIME, THERE'S **OCEANS** OF TERROR BUBBLING UP IN MY NEXT STORY!



YOU **RABID READERS** LOOK A LITTLE PALE AFTER THAT LAST **PULSE-POUNDER**... BETTER REST UP! LET **COUSIN EERIE** ARRANGE SOME **LOATHESOME LODGINGS** FOR THE NIGHT... RIGHT UP THE DARK, CREAKING STAIRS YOU'LL FIND A...

# ROOM WITH A VIEW!

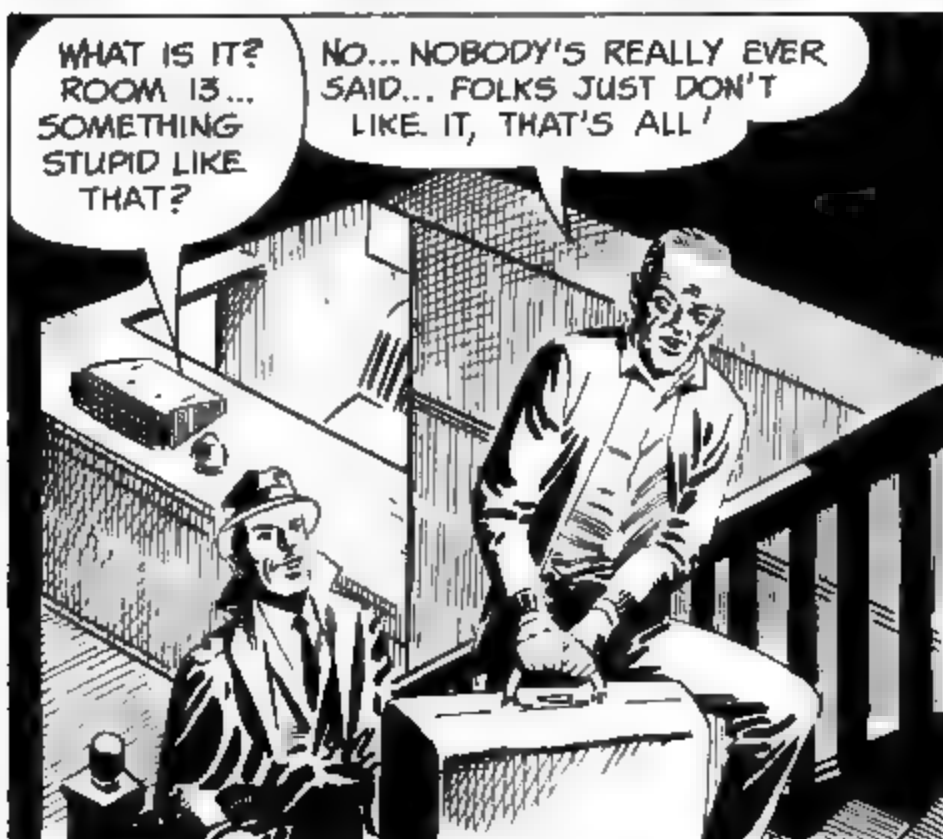
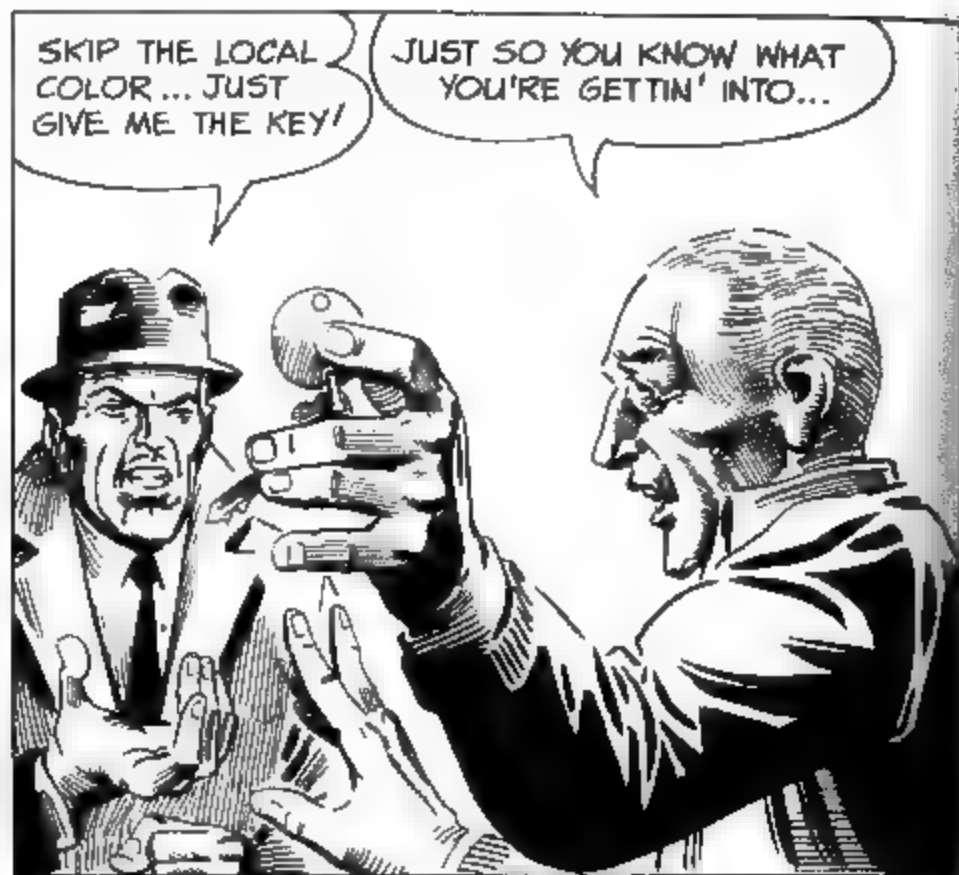
IT WAS LIKE A HUNDRED AND ONE OTHER SMALL-TOWN HOTELS DEXTER HAD STAYED IN. BAD LIGHTING, SEEDY FURNISHINGS... ORDINARY AND DULL...

I NEED A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT

SORRY, MISTER! WE'RE FULL UP!

DON'T GIVE ME THAT! LOOK AT YOUR BOARD... THERE'S ONE ROOM LEFT!

N-NO... WE **NEVER** RENT THAT ONE! I'VE BEEN GIVEN ORDERS...









YET EACH TIME DEXTER CLOSED HIS EYES, HE COULD STILL SEE THE EVIL FACE AND CHILLING STARE OF THE MIRROR REFLECTION..



IT LOOKED SO REAL .. BUT THERE WAS NOTHING BEHIND ME ... **BLAST IT!** CAN'T SLEEP FOR THINKING ABOUT IT... AWW, WHAT'S THE USE...



... I'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK!



N-NOT HERE... N-NOTHING JUST LIKE BEFORE!



**NOT ANOTHER MINUTE** ... I'M NOT STAYING HERE!



FRONT DESK. ANYTHING WRONG, MR. DEXTER?

GOTTA GET HOLD OF MYSELF... I'LL SOUND LIKE A FOOL... CLERK'S CRAZY HINTS MADE MY IMAGINATION RUN WILD... THAT'S ALL... HAS TO BE...



N-NO... JUST WANTED TO LEAVE A CALL FOR ME AT EIGHT...

THE NIGHT CREPT ON BUT NO SLEEP CAME TO DEXTER... ONLY AGONIZING, TORTURED THOUGHTS...

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE LEFT... **HAS** TO BE MY IMAGINATION... MIND PLAYING TRICKS... THOSE **T-THINGS**... SO REAL! TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE... WHAT IF THEY'RE IN THERE NOW... WATCHING... CAN'T BE... SILLY... WON'T...



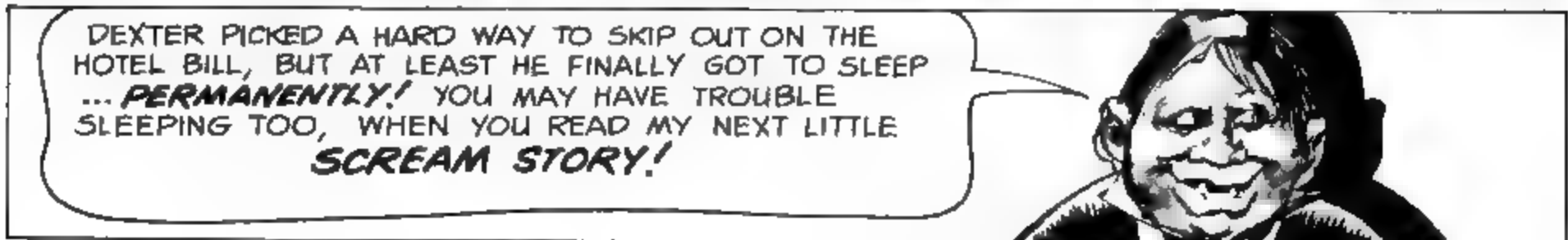
I'VE GOT TO KNOW!



NO MORE! I'LL PUT AN END TO THIS.... NOW!!









OLD AGE CREEPING  
UP ON YOU,  
COUSINS? FIND  
YOU CAN'T  
KEEP PACE  
WITH THE  
YOUNGER  
GENERATION  
OF FIENDS?

PERHAPS YOU'LL  
APPRECIATE THE  
SOLUTION  
HUBERT MANNIX  
ARRIVES AT, WHEN  
HE MAKES WHAT  
LOOKS LIKE A

YOU GLARE AT THE  
DOCTOR WITH WEARY  
DISGUST...YOU'VE COME  
TOO FAR, TOO NEAR  
SUCCESS, TO BE HELD  
UP BY THIS WHITE-  
SMOCKED JELLYFISH...

COURTNEY, YOU FOOL,  
WHAT'S WRONG? DON'T YOU HAVE  
EVERYTHING YOU NEED? I SET UP  
THIS LABORATORY FOR YOU, PRO-  
VIDED YOUR HUMAN GUINEA PIGS...  
THIS IS YOUR **BIG CHANCE**,  
WHY HESITATE?!

I--I KEEP  
THINKING ABOUT  
THIS BOY...YOU  
STAND TO GAIN  
FROM THE  
OPERATION,  
MR. MANNIX,  
BUT FOR HIM...  
IT'LL JUST BE ..  
**MURDER!**

# FAR FROM THE BIG

THAT'S WHY  
YOU'RE GETTING  
**THIS**, COURTNEY!  
THE BULK OF MY  
FORTUNE...DON'T  
THINK ABOUT MURDER  
...THINK ABOUT THE  
CAREER YOU CAN HAVE  
WITH THIS BEHIND  
YOU!

I-I NEVER  
DREAMED  
THEY EVEN  
PRINTED BILLS  
OF THAT  
DENOMINATION...

...I'LL DO IT! BUT IT'S  
GOING TO BE RISKY, MR.  
MANNIX. I WARNED YOU  
BEFORE, I'VE ONLY  
EXPERIMENTED...

AT MY AGE, COURTNEY,  
I CAN'T LOSE! JUST MAKE  
SURE MY FELLOW GUINEA  
PIG'S IN GOOD HEALTH,  
WHILE I GET READY...

YOU CHOSE  
QUITE WELL,  
MR. MANNIX...  
HE'S IN RE-  
MARKABLE  
CONDITION!  
SURPRISINGLY  
SO CONSIDERING  
THE POTENCY OF  
THE DRUG...

FOR A WHILE I  
THOUGHT IT WASN'T  
GOING TO WORK...  
AND I GAVE HIM  
ENOUGH TO PUT  
A HERD OF  
ELEPHANTS INTO  
A COMA...

...LET'S GET  
STARTED BEFORE  
HE PULLS OUT  
OF IT!

THERE'S STILL  
TIME TO RECONSIDER,  
MR. MANNIX...

THE ONLY THING I MIGHT  
RECONSIDER IS THE AMOUNT  
I'M PAYING YOU, COURTNEY...  
**GET ON WITH IT!** I'VE  
GOTTEN VERY SICK OF THIS  
BODY IN A LIFETIME...

VERY WELL,  
MR. MANNIX...

...IT WON'T  
BURDEN YOU  
MUCH  
LONGER!

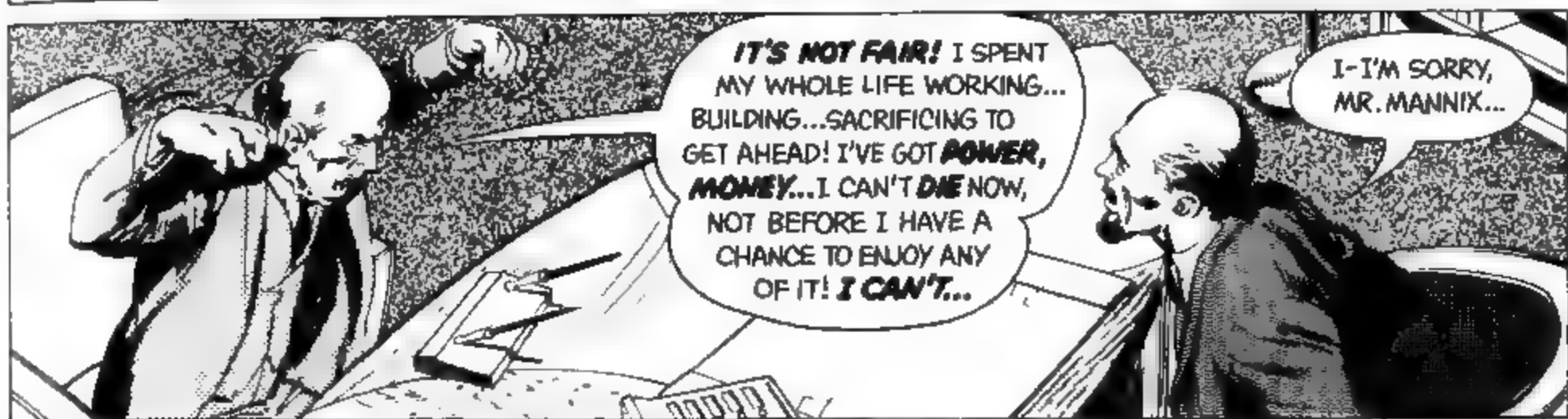
THE SLOW HISS OF GAS  
BEGINS TO THUNDER IN YOUR  
EARS, AND YOUR MIND GIVES IN  
TO A KALEIDOSCOPE OF THOUGHT  
AND MEMORY...



...AND YOU LEAVE THE PRESENT, RETREATING IN TIME TO ANOTHER DAY, AND ANOTHER DOCTOR...

...**DIE? I'M GOING TO DIE!** B-BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOUGH... HEALTHY...

MR. MANNIX, AT YOUR AGE, THE BODY IS FAILING, DETERIORATING ...IT DOESN'T FIGHT DISEASE AS IT USED TO...YOU ASKED FOR THE TRUTH...AT BEST, YOU HAVE, PERHAPS... **A YEAR...**



**IT'S NOT FAIR!** I SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE WORKING... BUILDING...SACRIFICING TO GET AHEAD! I'VE GOT **POWER, MONEY...** I CAN'T **DIE** NOW, NOT BEFORE I HAVE A CHANCE TO ENJOY ANY OF IT! **I CAN'T...**

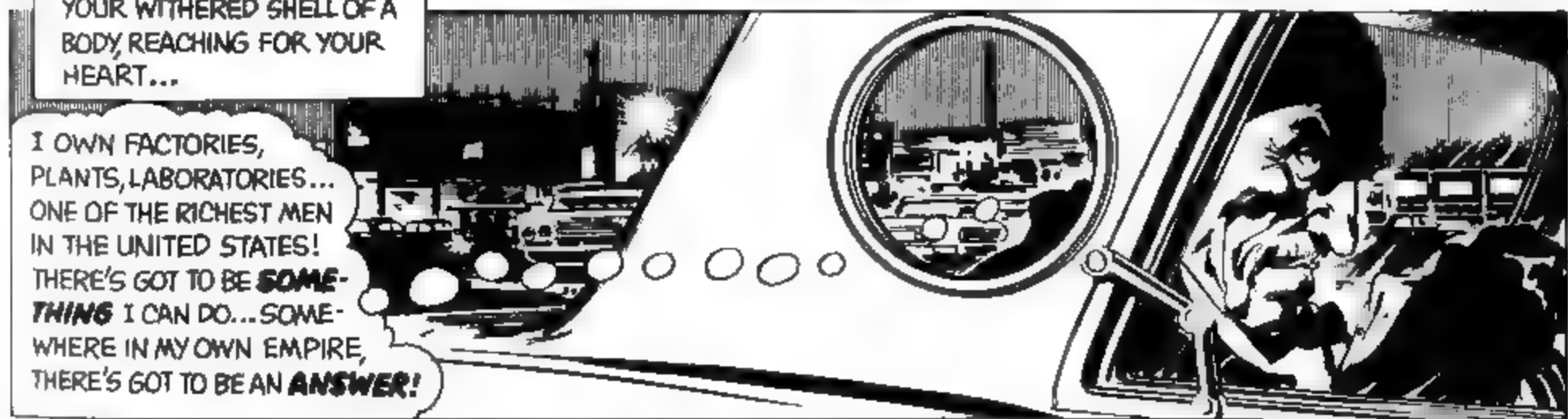
I-I'M SORRY, MR. MANNIX...



I WON'T **ACCEPT** IT! I DIDN'T GET TO WHERE I AM TODAY BY GIVING UP! SOME WAY, SOMEHOW, I'LL GET AROUND **THIS** JUST LIKE I HAVE EVERYTHING ELSE!

AGAIN, YOU CAN FEEL THE ANGER, THE FRUSTRATION, THE FEAR THAT GRIPPED YOU ON THAT DAY, CLAWING AT YOUR WITHERED SHELL OF A BODY, REACHING FOR YOUR HEART...

I OWN FACTORIES, PLANTS, LABORATORIES... ONE OF THE RICHEST MEN IN THE UNITED STATES! THERE'S GOT TO BE **SOME-THING** I CAN DO... SOMEWHERE IN MY OWN EMPIRE, THERE'S GOT TO BE AN **ANSWER!**



AGAIN, YOU SPEND THE HOURS, WEEKS, MONTHS IN THE DESPERATE, AGONIZING SEARCH, NEVER RELAXING OR RELENTING UNTIL FINALLY...

...**COURTNEY!** RALPH COURTNEY! A DOCTOR KICKED OUT OF OUR RESEARCH DIVISION FOR HIS UNORTHODOX AND RADICAL EXPERIMENTS...ESPECIALLY IN **SURGERY!**



YOU REMEMBER THE SHABBY OFFICE, THE NOISE AND CLATTER OF THE TEST ANIMALS, COURTNEY'S VACILLATING VAGUENESS...

...OF COURSE THE TRANSPLANTS HAVE HAD A DEGREE OF SUCCESS WITH **ANIMALS**, MR. MANNIX... BUT WHAT YOU SUGGEST! I DON'T SEE HOW I...

I'VE READ YOUR NOTES AND MADE MY OFFER, COURTNEY! YOU KNOW YOU WON'T TURN IT DOWN... **YOU CAN'T!** ONCE THE LAB IS COMPLETED, WE'LL BEGIN...

B-BUT IT'S NOT JUST YOU... THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER PERSON! NO ONE WOULD VOLUNTARILY...

THAT, I'LL TAKE CARE OF **PERSONALLY!**

YOU BEGAN A NEW SEARCH, THE MOST CAREFUL AND IMPORTANT SEARCH OF YOUR LIFE... A SEARCH FOR THE PERSON YOU WERE GOING TO **BECOME**...

**HIM** AGAIN! IN HERE ALMOST EVERY NIGHT... ALWAYS ALOOF, NO APPARENT FRIENDS...

...YOUNG, BUT POWERFUL AND STRONG! SEEMS TO BE JUST WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR...

...YET, HE HAS LOOKS... ATTRACTIVE TO WOMEN...



LIVES ALONE, NO  
PERMANENT ASSOCIATIONS,  
NO RELATIVES... EVERYTHING  
I'M SEEKING... AND HE'LL  
NEVER BE MISSED!

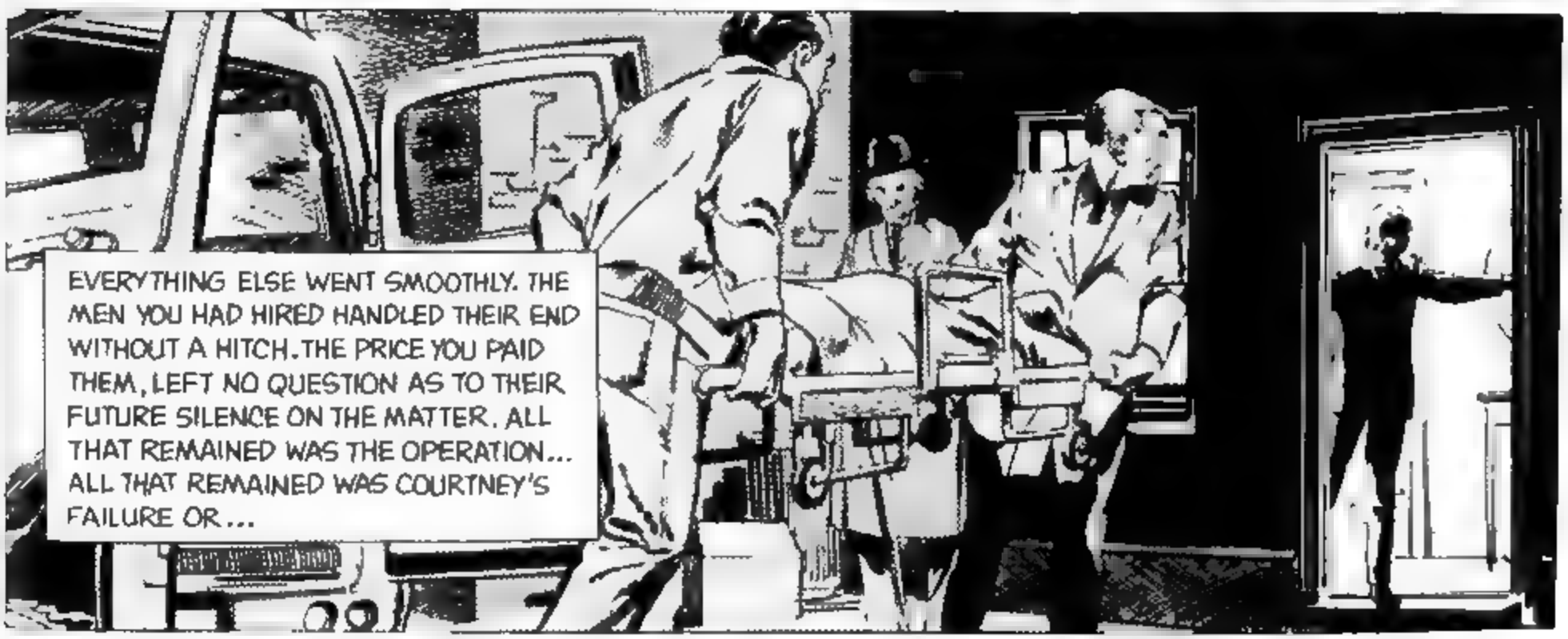
NOW, YOUR MIND BRINGS BACK NIGHT  
AFTER NIGHT AS YOU SLINKED IN SHADOWS  
AND DOORWAYS, FOLLOWING, OBSERVING...

WITH THE DECISION  
MADE, YOU WASTED NO  
TIME... ACTING AT THE  
FIRST OPPORTUNITY...

COURTNEY SAID A FEW  
DROPS WOULD DO THE TRICK, BUT  
WHY TAKE CHANCES... THAT WINE  
HE DRINKS IS THICK AND DARK  
ENOUGH TO COVER ANYTHING.

LORD! WHAT A SYSTEM  
HE MUST HAVE... I  
THOUGHT THE DRUG  
WOULD NEVER  
REACT!

THEN, YOU WAIT...  
LONG, TORTUROUS  
MOMENTS...  
WONDERING  
WHERE, WHEN, IT  
WOULD HAPPEN...



EVERYTHING ELSE WENT SMOOTHLY. THE  
MEN YOU HAD HIRED HANDLED THEIR END  
WITHOUT A HITCH. THE PRICE YOU PAID  
THEM, LEFT NO QUESTION AS TO THEIR  
FUTURE SILENCE ON THE MATTER. ALL  
THAT REMAINED WAS THE OPERATION...  
ALL THAT REMAINED WAS COURTNEY'S  
FAILURE OR...

NOW, YOU HEAR THE VOICE...CALLING  
YOU BACK FROM YOUR THOUGHTS,  
BACK TO THE PRESENT...

THERE IS NO NEED TO SEE...  
YOU CAN **FEEL!** THE STRENGTH,  
THE VITALITY OF YOUTH...

THERE'S A  
MIRROR AROUND  
SOME PLACE...  
WHERE'D I PUT  
THAT MIRROR...?

...**SUCCESS!** I-IT'S A  
SUCCESS, MR. MANNIX...**I**  
**DID IT!** YOUR BRAIN TRANS-  
FERRED TO **HIS** BODY! WAIT'LL  
YOU SEE, YOU'VE GOT TO SEE...

I'M **FREE!** FREE OF THAT DYING  
SHELL MY BRAIN WAS IMPRISONED IN...  
A WHOLE NEW LIFE AHEAD OF ME...

ONLY AS YOU MOVE  
ACROSS THE LABORA-  
TORY, STEATHILY,  
SILENTLY, DO YOU  
BEGIN TO FEEL THE  
WEAKNESS, A SLIGHT  
NAUSEA AND VERTIGO  
...STILL YOU DRIVE  
YOURSELF FORWARD...

YOU'VE GOT TO SEE YOURSELF, MR. MANNIX...  
YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT TILL YOU SEE IT...

...A NEW LIFE THAT'S GOING TO NEED  
LOTS OF MONEY...**COURTNEY'S MONEY!**

THEN, AS YOU LUNGE, THE BLACKNESS SWIRLS  
UP ENVELOPING ALL IN YOUR VISION AND YOU  
DRIFT INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS...

ONCE AGAIN,  
REALITY  
REACHES OUT  
FOR YOU, PULL-  
ING YOU BACK...

...MANNIX?  
**NOOOOOO!**

**HA!** I MANAGED  
TO FINISH THE JOB ON  
COURTNEY EVEN WHILE  
BLACKED OUT! GUESS I GOT  
UP TOO SOON AFTER THE  
OPERATION...FEEL PRETTY  
GOOD NOW...



THE NEED FOR URGENCY SEIZES YOU. THE NIGHT IS FADING AND THERE ARE STILL THINGS TO BE DONE...

FROM THE DOORWAY, YOU STRIKE AND THROW A MATCH... THE PLACE OF YOUR REBIRTH IS AN INSTANT INFERNO, DEVOURING THE WITHERED REMAINS OF YOUR PAST...

THIS ALCOHOL OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK ONCE EVERYTHING'S DOUSED WITH IT...

AND YOU DON'T STOP RUNNING UNTIL YOU'RE HOME... AT LEAST THE PLACE THIS BODY CALLED HOME...

ONCE OUTSIDE, YOU RUN... FAST AND FURIOUSLY AS YOUR NEW BODY CAN CARRY YOU... INTO THE SAFETY OF THE SHADOWS...

NO MATTER! SUN'LL BE UP SOON... I CAN GET SOME LIGHT THROUGH THE WINDOW...

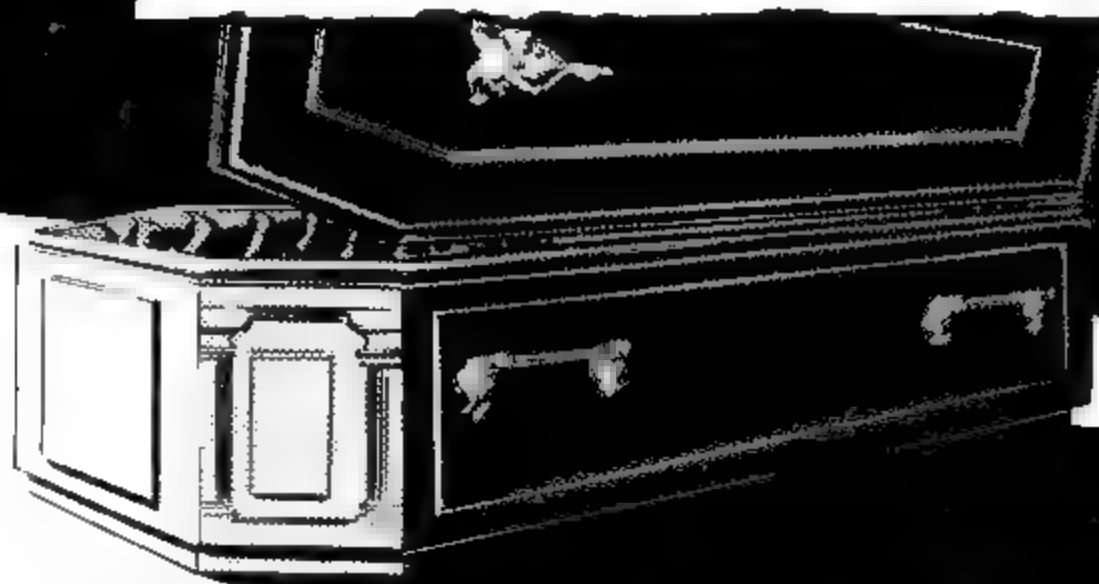
MADE IT! I CAN HIDE OUT HERE UNTIL I'M READY TO PLAN MY NEXT MOVE... WHERE ARE THE LIGHTS? DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY SWITCHES NEARBY...

THE START OF A NEW DAY, AND THE START OF A NEW LIFE... NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

SLOWLY, SOFTLY, THE DAWN GROWS AND EXPANDS INTO DAY...THE RAYS OF THE SUN SEEKING YOU OUT, SURROUNDING YOU, BATHING YOU WITH LIGHT...THEN, YOU FEEL THE PAIN...EATING AT YOU, BURNING YOU, **DESTROYING YOU!**



YOU SINK AND CRUMBLE TO THE GROUND, THE BRILLIANT SUNLIGHT NOW REVEALING THE LAST SIGHT YOUR DYING EYES WILL EVER SEE...RE-VEALING THE WAITING COFFIN, WAITING FOR THE BODY OF THE **VAMPIRE** WHO SLEEPS IN IT, THE BODY YOU **STOLE**...THE BODY IT WOULD HAVE PROTECTED FROM THE SUN'S VAMPIRE DESTROYING RAYS!



HEE, HEE! I GUESS THERE ARE SOME SUBJECTS THAT JUST SHOULDN'T HAVE LIGHT THROWN ON THEM...TOO BAD MANNIX HAD TO PICK ONE! SO IF YOU DECIDE TO SWAP BODIES, EERIE AFICIONADOS, BETTER MAKE SURE IT WAS ORIGINALLY OWNED BY A LITTLE OLD LADY WHO ONLY USED IT ON WEEKENDS!



READY TO GOROMAN IN THE GLOAMIN' WITH ONE OF CAESAR'S SOLDIERS, FANGED FRIENDS? THEN LEAP BACK WITH ME THROUGH *HYSTERICAL HISTORY* TO 41 A.D. WHEN ROME'S LEGIONS HAVE EXTENDED THE EMPIRE TO THE BRITISH ISLES, BRINGING CIVILIZATION TO A DARK AND SUPERSTITIOUS LAND. BUT WATCH NOW AND SEE IF EVEN ROMAN MIGHT CAN PENETRATE THE LURKING HORRORS OF THE...

# Cave of the Druids!

HIS STRONG RIGHT HAND CLENCHING AND UNCLENCHING ON THE HILT OF HIS FLAT SWORD, MARCUS SEVERUS STARED IMPATIENTLY INTO THE LEATHERY FACE OF THE ANCIENT CELT. HIS REPUTATION IN THE LEGION HAD BEEN MADE BY ACTION... THE OLD MAN'S RAMBLINGS AND WARNINGS DID NOT SIT WELL.

GO NO FURTHER, LEGIONNAIRE! THE COMRADES YOU SEEK PLUNGED UNHEEDING INTO THE BLACK WOOD... BE NOT AS FOOLISH AS THEY!

MY ORDERS ARE TO CONTACT THAT PATROL... WHEREVER THEY MAY BE! IF THIS IS THEIR PATH, SO BE IT!



EVIL HAUNTS THIS SHADOWED  
PLACE! THOSE WHO ENTER  
SELDOM LEAVE!

I WON MY FREEDOM  
IN THE SANDS OF THE  
COLISEUM, GRANDFATHER!  
IF I ESCAPED A GLADIATOR'S  
DEATH, SURELY I CAN FIND  
MY WAY OUT OF YOUR  
FOREST!

THE TRAIL TWISTED AND TURNED AMONG  
THE GNARLED SPREADING OAKS WHOSE  
INTERTWINING OVERHEAD BRANCHES ALL  
BUT SHUT OUT THE LATE AFTERNOON SUN...

BLAST THE THICK-HEADED  
CENTURION WHO'D LEAD  
A PATROL INTO *THIS*! WHAT  
WAS HE THINKING OF?  
WHAT LED HIM TO IT?

A SOUND DRIFTED THROUGH THE SILENT  
TREES, TINKLING AND HOLLOW, LIKE THE  
LAUGHTER OF A WOMAN FAR AWAY...

DID ANY BIRD EVER MAKE  
SUCH A MOCKING SOUND?  
YET WHAT ELSE  
COULD IT BE?

CLEARING AHEAD,  
BUT THAT SMELL  
COMING FROM IT...  
THERE'S BUT ONE  
SUCH STENCH...

...THE STENCH OF DEATH!!

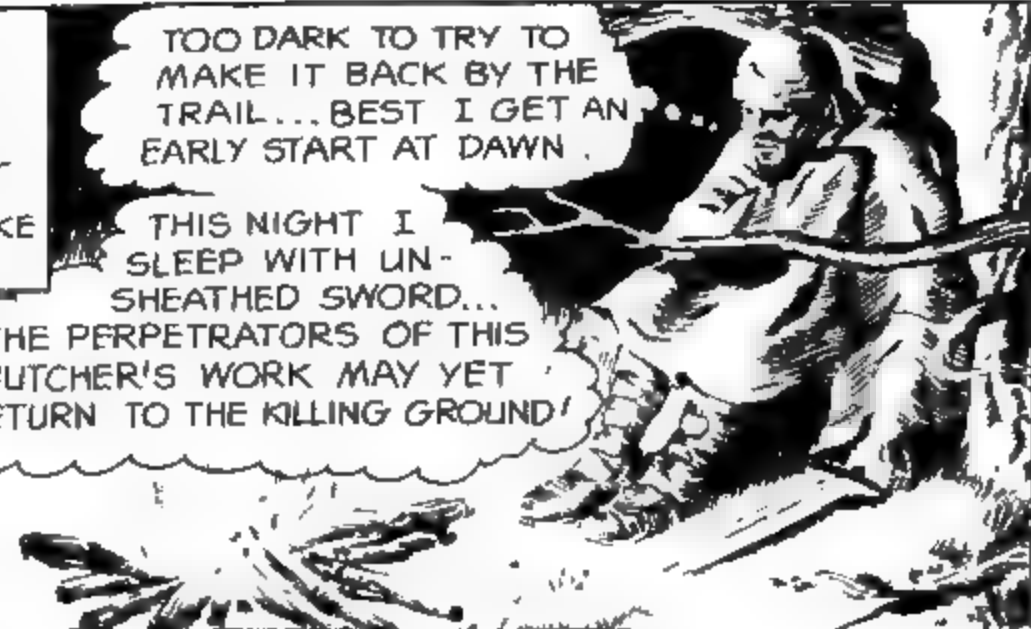
THE PATROL! EVERY  
MAN WITH HIS HEART  
RIPPED OUT!

NIGHT HAD DESCENDED ON THE GLOOMY WOOD BY THE TIME MARCUS HAD PUT THE LAST LEGIONNAIRE IN A SHALLOW GRAVE, LEAVING THE MUTILATED BODIES SOME SMALL PROTECTION AGAINST THE SCAVENGERS OF THE FOREST UNTIL THE GARRISON COULD TAKE PROPER ACTION...



TOO DARK TO TRY TO MAKE IT BACK BY THE TRAIL... BEST I GET AN EARLY START AT DAWN.

THIS NIGHT I SLEEP WITH UNSHEATHED SWORD... THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS BUTCHER'S WORK MAY YET RETURN TO THE KILLING GROUND!



LONG HOURS CREPT BY... NIGHT BREEZES BLEW CHILL AND THE FOREST DAMP SET IN, MAKING MARCUS LONG FOR THE WARM OLIVE GROVES OF SOUTHERN ITALY...



EACH MAN DEAD, BUT NO SIGN OF A BATTLE... HEARTS ARE NOT SLICED LIKE THAT FROM THE BODY OF **ANY** LIVING WARRIORS... SOMETHING ELSE GOT THOSE MEN...

THERE WAS THE SOUND OF MOVEMENT IN THE TREES, WITH A CRY, MARCUS LEAPED UP ONLY TO BE CAUGHT IN THE VICE-GRIP OF SLITHERING SNAKES OF GNARLED OAK...



**THE TREES!**  
THEY'RE ALIVE!

THE CONSTRICTING BANDS DREW TIGHT FORCING THE LIFE BREATH OUT OF THE LEGIONNAIRE WHOSE BLADE FLASHED AND HACKED AT THE UNNATURAL MENACE...



SWORD'S NO GOOD! LIKE STRIKING IRON...

THIS IS HOW THE PATROL DIED... CRUSHED BY THESE DEMON TREES!

ONE LAST CHANCE... GOING TO DIE... IF I MISS...



MARCUS FLICKED WITH HIS SWORD, SENDING A BLAZING FIREBRAND ARCHING INTO THE AIR...



IGNORING THE PAIN OF GRIPPING THE SMOULDERING BRANCH, THE ROMAN THRUST AGAIN AND AGAIN WITH HIS FIERY WEAPON AGAINST THE DEATH CLUTCH OF THE OAKS...



WEAKENED BY THE ORDEAL, MARCUS COLLAPSED WITHIN THE SAFETY OF THE FIRE'S GLOW, NOT MOVING FOR LONG MOMENTS, THEN FREEZING STILL AS FROM THE SURROUNDING DARKNESS SOMETHING STIRRED...



THIS NIGHT WE'LL FACE THE ALTAR WITH ANOTHER ROMAN HEART FOR GREAT DISASTER!

EVERY MUSCLE IN HIS STEEL FRAMED BODY TENSED AS MARCUS HEARD THE STEALTHY FOOTFALLS ON THE FOREST FLOOR ... A SHADOWY FIGURE BENT NEAR...



THE HORNED HELMETS! THEY'RE *DRUIDS*... DEMON WORSHIPPERS ALL!

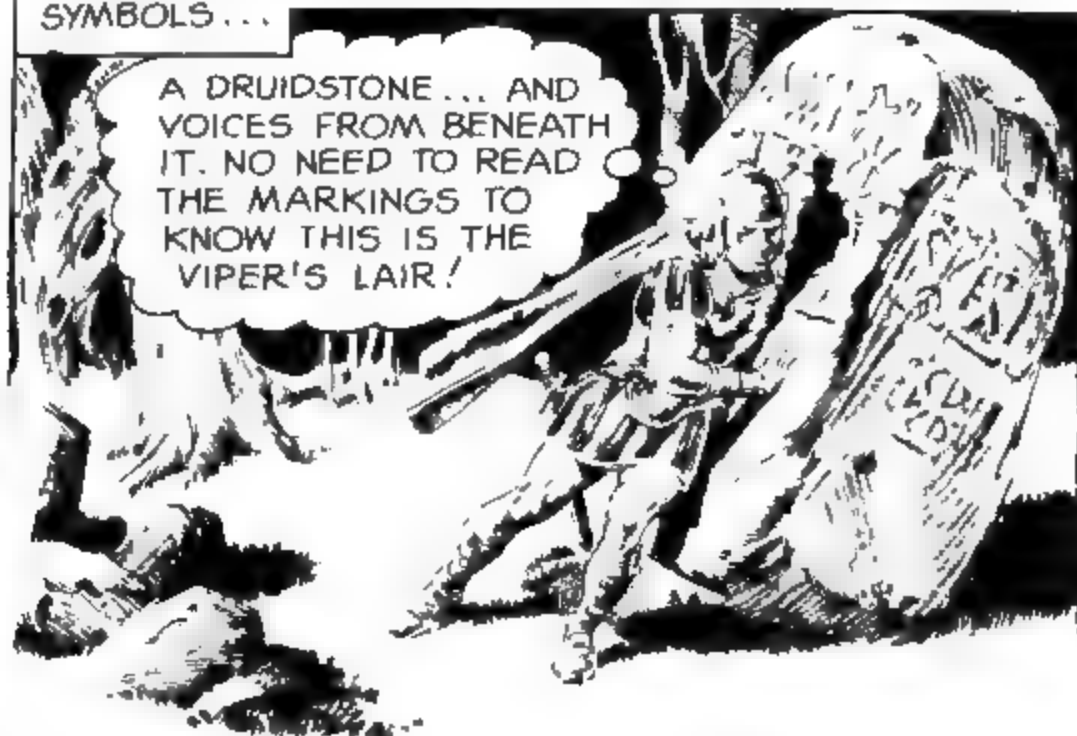




ABOVE HIM, THE TREE LEAVES WERE RAT-  
TLED BY A FAINT WIND WHICH ALSO CAR-  
RIED WITH IT THE SAME DISTANT LAUGHTER  
MARCUS HAD HEARD EARLIER...



CAUTIOUSLY, THE ROMAN SLID THROUGH THE DARK-  
NESS AND INTO ANOTHER, SMALLER CLEARING  
MARKED BY A HUGE BOULDER BEARING STRANGE  
SYMBOLS...



THE GODS TAKE ME!  
THE DRUIDS TRY TO  
RIVAL PLUTO HIMSELF!

MARCUS CROUCHED LOW IN SILENT FURY AS THE BARBAROUS RITES WERE PLAYED OUT...

BREATHE LIFE INTO OUR SLAIN KING... THE LIFE FROM THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO KILLED HIM...

'TIS AS I FEARED! THE HEARTS WERE NOT WORTHY TO MOVE SO NOBLE A BODY! EVEN PASSES OF THE MIGHTY WAND HAVE NO AVAIL...



EVEN AS YOU SEE ME AND MY WAND AS PROOF OF DIS-PATER'S MAGIC... EVEN AS I DREW THE OTHER ROMANS TO US... EVEN SO DOES MY SORCERY CALL YET ANOTHER... ANOTHER OF WARRIOR'S HEART...



... HE WHO LURKS BEHIND YOU! SEIZE HIM! HIS HEART WILL BRING LIFE TO YOUR KING!

IT WAS HER LAUGHTER I HEARD! TAUNTING ME ON, DRAWING ME HERE...



DRUIDESS WITCH! LEARN HOW DEARLY MARCUS SERVERUS SELLS HIS HEART!

OUR NUMBERS ARE NOT THE MATCH FOR HIS SKILL!

THEN LET HIM FACE THE POWERS OF MY WAND!



ABOVE THE RING OF HIS OWN SLASHING SWORD, MARCUS HEARD THE SOUND OF THE DRUIDESS' MOCKING LAUGHTER AS HER WAND DANCED THROUGH THE AIR... THE ATTACKERS MELTED INTO A HIDEOUS NEW FORM!

FIGHT ON! FIGHT ON ONLY AS THE SPAWN OF GREAT DISPATER CAN!

JUPITER'S BLOOD! SHE PITS ME WITH GLADIATORS OF THE DAMNED!



MY STRUGGLE IS DOOMED! THE KILLING STROKES LEFT IN MY ARM ARE NUMBERED... EACH THRUST BRINGS ME ANOTHER STEP CLOSER TO DEATH AT THESE UNNATURAL HANDS!



YET ALL THIS EVIL... ALL HER POWER, LIES IN THE WAND!



ACHING LIMBS AND MUSCLES, PUSHED TO THE LIMITS OF MORTAL ENDURANCE, WENT TAUT WITH ONE LAST EFFORT, AND OUT OF THE SWIRLING RIPTIDE OF COMBAT... MARCUS LEAPED!

MY WAND! STOP HIM, STOP HIM!



BASE IDOL! CONSUME THE FRUIT OF YOUR OWN EVIL!





A GREAT QUIET ENVELOPED THE HUGE CAVERN AS THE WAND OF YEW TURNED TO A BLACKENED CRISP WITHIN THE RAGING INFERNO OF THE IDOL'S MOUTH...

IT WORKED! BUT...  
BUT WHY ARE  
THEY STARING?...

NO! OH,  
N-NOOOO!



PITY AND REVULSION ARE NOT STOCK IN TRADE OF A WARRIOR AND SOLDIER, YET MARCUS COULD FEEL BOTH AS HE WEARILY PUSHED THROUGH THE STUNNED DRUIDS TO THE STEPS LEADING TO THE OUTER WORLD OF SANITY AND LIGHT... LEAVING THE CHARRED SCENT OF BURNT ASHES TO FOREVER HAUNT THE CAVE OF THE DRUIDS!



THE WAND! IT  
WAS MY LIFE...  
MY POWER!  
ITS FATE WAS  
MY OWN!  
EEEEEEEEEE!



AND AS GOOD OL'  
MARCUS *WANDERS* OUT  
OF THE CAVE, THERE'S  
NO SENSE IN YOUR  
HANGING AROUND  
*WANDERING* WHAT MY  
NEXT WEIRD WORK'S  
LIKE... TURN TO IT,  
IT'S *WANDERFUL*!





TO KICK OFF THIS **GHOSTLY-GASSER** FROM MY **GORY GAZETTE**, LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO **ROGER CULP**, A LITERARY AGENT, WHO IN HIS OWN WORDS WILL TELL YOU OF THE **EERIE EVENTS** AND **HORRIBLE HAPPENINGS** TAKING PLACE IN AND AROUND.

**THE**

# LIGHTHOUSE!

"THE ROCKBOUND COAST OF MAINE IS A LONG WAY FROM MANHATTAN'S COCKTAIL PARTIES AND LITERARY TEAS, BUT WHEN MY TOP WRITER WAS LATE TO THE PUBLISHER WITH A BOOK FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CAREER, I DECIDED TO MAKE THE TRIP... **IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN!**"

BLASTED  
PEA-SOUP! DRIVING'S  
IMPOSSIBLE! MAYBE  
I CAN FIND THE  
LIGHTHOUSE ON  
FOOT...CAN'T  
BE FAR...



"WHY ERIC STANDISH WOULD GIVE UP A PENTHOUSE TO WRITE IN AN ABANDONED LIGHTHOUSE WAS BEYOND ME, ALTHOUGH EACH STEP I TOOK THROUGH THAT FOG ENSHROUDED NIGHT BROUGHT ME CLOSER TO AN ANSWER.. "

LISTEN TO THAT SURF  
POUND...ERIC'S PLACE  
MUST BE NEAR BY...  
I CAN--

HELLO!  
WHO'S  
THERE?

MATTHEW  
FRYE! IS IT YOU,  
MATTHEW FRYE?

AL  
WILKINSON

"SHE SEEMED TO WANDER OUT OF NOWHERE...UNTOUCHED AND UNAFFECTED BY THE NIGHT'S CHILL AND THE DAMPNES OF THE ENVELOPING MISTS..."

Y-YOU'RE NOT MATTHEW FRYE...

NO...BUT I'M LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE TOO! ERIC STANDISH. SUPPOSED TO LIVE IN THE OLD LIGHT-HOUSE...I CAN'T FIND IT IN THIS FOG!

Y-YES. THE LIGHTHOUSE! COME THIS WAY...

"THE GIRL MOVED WITH SURENESS THROUGH THE LAYERS OF FOG... AHEAD, THE BOOMING SOUND OF THE ATLANTIC BREAKING ON THE COASTAL ROCKS GREW LOUDER AND NEARER."

"THE OCEAN'S ROAR BECAME LIKE NEAR-BY THUNDER...THEN WITHOUT WARNING, THE LANTERN LIGHT WAS GONE!"

HEY! WHERE ARE YOU?

THIS WAY... SHE WAS MOVING THIS WAY.

YAAAAAH!!



"MY HANDS BECAME CLAWS SCRAPING AND CLINGING TO THE WET EARTH AND ROCKS OF THE CLIFF'S EDGE, WHILE MY LEGS THRASHED IN EMPTY AIR, 100 FEET ABOVE THE POUNDING SURF!"



HELP ME!  
FOR GOD'S SAKE!  
SOMEONE  
HELP!

"FOR ETERNAL MOMENTS I DANGLED LIKE DEADWEIGHT, WATCHING IN HORROR AS MY FINGERS GREW STIFF AND NUMB AND SLOWLY BEGAN TO SLIP..."



ERIC!

THANK  
HEAVEN I HEARD  
YOU SHOUTING!

"GROUND WAS BENEATH MY FEET AND I LOOKED GRATEFULLY INTO A FAMILIAR FACE... A FACE SOMEHOW GROWN QUICKLY OLD AND TIRED..."



I COULDN'T HAVE LASTED ANOTHER  
SECOND BUT THAT POOR GIRL!  
SHE MUST HAVE  
WALKED RIGHT OFF!

GIRL?  
WHAT GIRL?  
TELL  
ME!

"ERIC LISTENED WITH GRIM RESIGNATION AS I TOLD HIM WHAT HAPPENED... LIKE A MAN HEARING FROM HIS DOCTOR THAT HE HAS A FATAL DISEASE!"



MY FAMILY HAD THEIR  
ROOTS IN THIS AREA...  
ALL MY LIFE, I'VE FELT  
SOMEDAY I *HAD* TO  
COME HERE...

IT'S DESOLATE, BUT  
COLORFUL. A LITTLE  
RESEARCH MIGHT UN-  
COVER MATERIAL FOR  
YOUR NOVEL HERE...

OH, I'VE  
DONE RESEARCH,  
ROGER... PERHAPS  
TOO MUCH! THAT'S  
WHAT LED ME...  
*HERE!*



"ERIC HAD DONE THE BEST HE COULD TO MAKE HIS QUARTERS SNUG AND COMFORTABLE... BUT NO AMOUNT OF HOMEY TOUCHES COULD CUT THE PERVAIDING GLOOM THAT HUNG ABOUT THE OLD LIGHTHOUSE."



THESE ARE MY NOTES, ROGER.  
THINGS I'VE DISCOVERED SINCE  
MOVING HERE! THINGS WHICH  
MAY FIT IN WITH  
YOUR STORY...

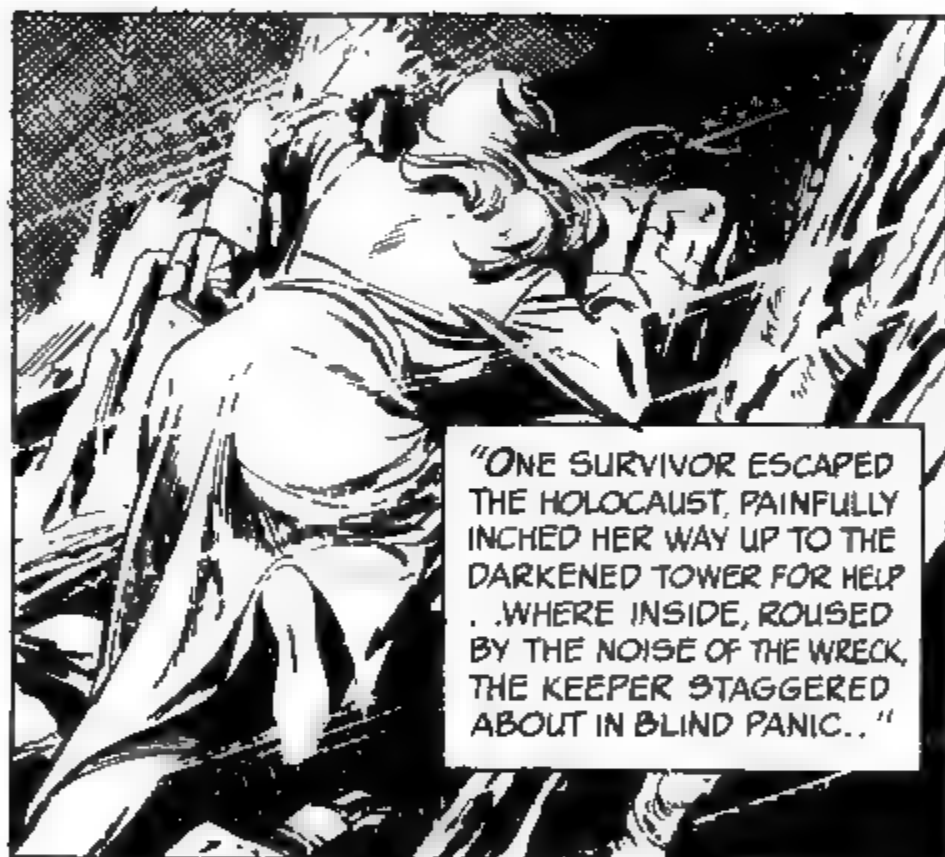
"**E**IGHTY YEARS AGO THE SCHOONER **WINDFALL** WAS DASHED TO PIECES ON THE SHOALS OFF THIS POINT... TREACHEROUS SHOALS FOR WHICH THIS TOWER'S BEACON WAS TO GIVE WARNING!"



"**B**UT THERE WAS NO WARNING LIGHT FOR THE **WINDFALL**... THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHTHOUSE HAD FALLEN ASLEEP IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR, UNMINDFUL OF THE STORM OR HIS DUTIES..."



"**O**NE SURVIVOR ESCAPED THE HOLOCAUST, PAINFULLY INCHED HER WAY UP TO THE DARKENED TOWER FOR HELP... WHERE INSIDE, ROUSED BY THE NOISE OF THE WRECK, THE KEEPER STAGGERED ABOUT IN BLIND PANIC..."



"**C**ONFRONTED BY THE ONLY WITNESS TO HIS NEGLIGENCE, THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHT COMPOUNDED HIS DEED WITH AN ACT MORE HORRIBLE FOR ITS DELIBERATENESS!"



THAT LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER WAS MY **GRANDFATHER**... **MATTHEW FRYE!**

B-BUT... THE GIRL I SAW **TONIGHT**... SHE WAS LOOKING FOR... YOUR **GRANDFATHER?!**



"DRIVING RAIN BEGAN A TATTOO ON THE WINDOWS. A STORM WAS MOVING IN FROM THE SEA. ."

ERIC STANDISH IS A FINE NAME...I'VE MADE QUITE A CAREER WRITING UNDER IT, BUT YOU NEVER ESCAPE THE NAME YOU'RE BORN WITH...  
YOU SEE, ROGER, I TOO AM **MATTHEW FRYE!**



# CLANG!

THAT NOISE!

T-THE WIND...



"EVEN AS I SAID IT, I KNEW THE WIND HADN'T MADE THE NOISE, JUST AS WE BOTH KNEW, WHILE RUSHING TO THE STAIRS, WHAT WE'D SEE BELOW..."

**MATTHEW FRYE!** IS IT YOU, **MATTHEW FRYE?!**



I'VE COME FOR YOU, **MATTHEW FRYE!**



OH, GOD!



"WAS IT FEAR THAT HELD ME IN PARALYZED HORROR OR *SOMETHING MORE?* ERIC STARED TRANSFIXED, YET HIS FEET MOVED, CARRYING HIM BACKWARD... ACROSS THE ROOM, OUT INTO THE WIND AND RAIN, ONTO THE OLD TOWER'S BALCONY

NOW, **MATTHEW FRYE...NOW!**



**ERIC!**





"ERIC'S FEARFUL SCREAM DROWNED IN THE RAGING WIND, AND THE TWO FIGURES DISAPPEARED INSTANTLY IN THE BOILING SURF BELOW..."



"I ALMOST FELL DOWN THE SPIRAL STAIRS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE AND OUT INTO THE LASHING STORM... YET ALL I COULD FIND BELOW WERE COASTAL ROCKS LIKE GIANT GRAVE-STONES AND THE OCEAN'S COLD CRASHING WAVES..."

"MUMB WITH EXHAUSTION AND COLD, I SOMEHOW MADE MY WAY BACK TO THE LIGHTHOUSE... MY LAST MEMORY OF THAT NIGHT IS CLAWING OPEN THE HEAVY IRON DOOR..."



"THE NEXT MORNING I WAS AWAKENED BY THE SCREECHING OF GULLS AND CRIES OF LOCAL FISHERMEN..."



"THE SEA HAD DISGORGED ITS VICTIMS OF THE NIGHT BEFORE AND THE SIGHT IS ETCHED FOREVER IN MY MIND... THE HORROR ON ERIC'S DEAD FACE WAS NOT OF DYING, BUT OF THE THING THAT CLUNG TO HIM... THE CORPSE OF A ONCE-BEAUTIFUL GIRL...  
**DEAD NOW FOR EIGHTY YEARS!**"



THERE'S ONE WRITER WHO REALLY GOT **INVOLVED** IN HIS WORK... PERSONALLY, I THINK HE WAS **ALL WET**, OR AT LEAST **WASHED UP!** NOW, GRAB A **WEIRD WAVE** AND SEE WHERE MY **TERROR TIDE** CARRIES YOU NEXT!





TIME NOW TO GO BACK INTO HYSTERICAL HISTORY WHERE A KNIGHT AND HIS SQUIRE ARE EMBARKING ON A MONSTROUS MISSION OF DEMONIAL DERRING-DO... CROUCH BEHIND YOUR SHIVER SHIELDS AND DISCOVER THE WRITHING REASON THESE TWO ARE RISKING ALL...

# TO SLAY A DRAGON!



S-SIRE! THIS IS MADNESS WE GO TO CERTAIN **DEATH!** THERE IS NO NEED! YOUR PROWESS, YOUR COURAGE ARE LEGEND! WHY RISK ALL AND GAIN NOTHING FROM THIS DEED!

WITH SILENCE AND STEALTH, KNIGHT AND SQUIRE DESCENDED INTO THE SOFT, EERIE LIGHT OF THE PHOSPHORESCENT VASTNESS BELOW, INTO THE CAVERNOUS VAULT OF THE BEAST PRIMORDIAL...

PERHAPS, MY LIEGE. BUT WHO HAS SURVIVED TO TRY?!

THERE IS MAGIC IN THE **BLOOD** OF DRAGONS... THOSE WHO BATHE IN IT ARE SAID TO BE MADE **INVULNERABLE!**



JEFF DOWNS



THE PAIR EDGED FORWARD ACROSS THE ROCKY FLOOR, AND WITH EACH STEP, FEAR GAVE SPURS TO THE SQUIRE'S BITTERNESS...

HE THRIVES ON DANGER AND NOBLE DEEDS, BUT WHAT'S IT TO ME? NONE OF THE FAME, NONE OF THE GLORY IS MINE.

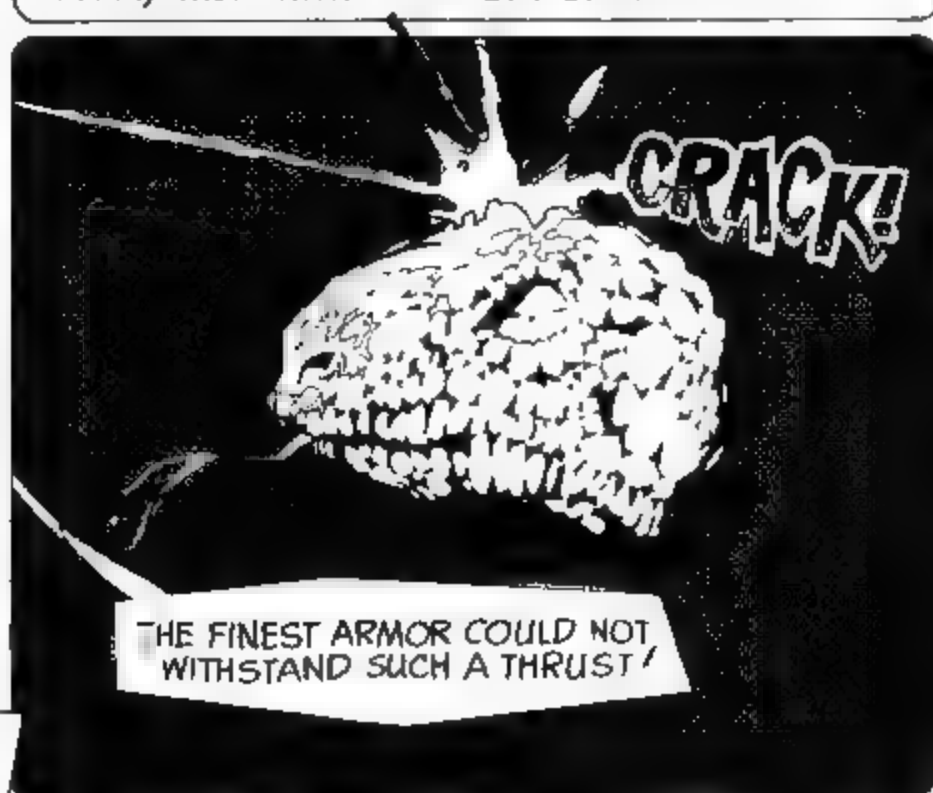
IF THERE'S DEATH HERE, HE CAN FACE IT ALONE!

MY SPEAR! QUICKLY, MAN, THE SPEAR BEFORE IT WAKES!

A STEEL-TENDONED ARM COCKED BACK THE SHAFT, ITS GLEAMING, DEADLY TIP UNERRINGLY AIMED AT THE SCALE-COATED HEAD OF THE BEHEMOTH BEFORE THEM...

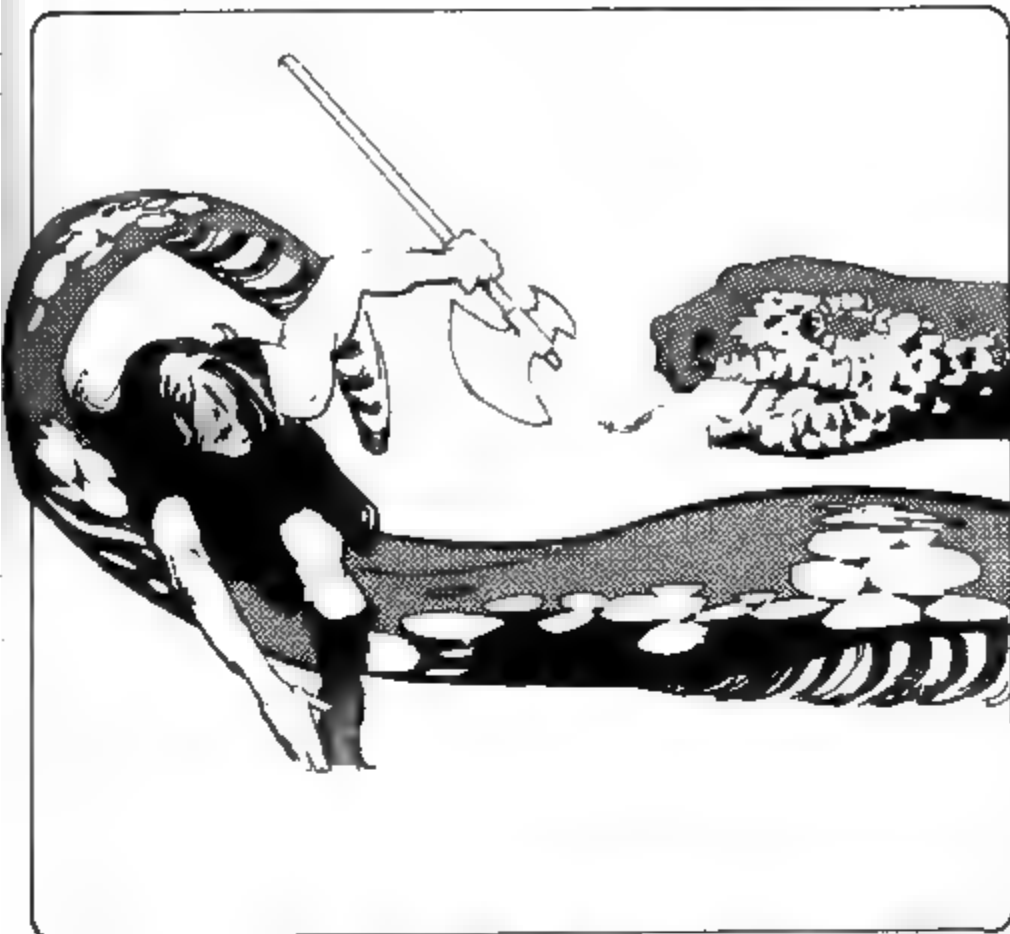


THE AIR CRACKLED WITH THE FORCE OF THE HURLED SPEAR, THEN WITH THE MIGHT OF ITS IMPACT...



WHAT WEAPONS THE SQUIRE HELD IN RESERVE FOR HIS MASTER WERE CAST TO THE GROUND AS THE GROTTA'S IMENSITY WAS FILLED WITH THE TERRIBLE TRUMPETING OF BESTIAL ANGER...





WITH THUNDERING SWIF-  
NESS THE  
MONSTER  
REPTILE  
CHARGED,  
LEAVING THE  
KNIGHT TO  
USE ALL HIS  
STRENGTH  
AND AGILITY  
TO AVOID  
THE  
GNASHING  
TEETH AND  
FLAILING  
CLAWS  
THAT  
CAUGHT  
AT CLOTH-  
ING AND  
SHREDDED  
SKIN...

RECOVERING WITH THE SURE  
MOTION OF A WARRIOR BORN  
TO BATTLE, THE KNIGHT  
ARCED HIS BODY, EVERY  
MUSCLE RIPPLING WITH  
THE STRAIN, INTO A BLOW  
OF SLEDGEHAMMER  
FORCE WHICH SENT  
STINGING VIBRATIONS  
FLOWING INTO THE  
VERY FIBRE OF HIS  
BEING...



ITS VERY  
SCALES ARE  
LIKE STONE  
OR STEEL! NO  
WEAPON OF  
MAN COULD  
SPLIT THIS  
HIDE!



UHHHHHH!

THE BEHEMOTH  
WHIRLED, TURNING  
TO CHARGE  
AGAIN, ITS  
AGITATING  
TAIL LASHING  
THROUGH  
SPACE LIKE  
A GIGANTIC  
WHIP,  
SMASHING  
HOME WITH  
A SWIFTESS  
BEYOND ANY  
MAN'S STRENGTH,  
AGILITY, OR  
LUCK TO  
AVOID...

**THWUMP!!!**

WITH A SICKENING IMPACT, THE KNIGHT CRASHED AGAINST STONE, ONLY TO TRY TO RISE IMMEDIATELY, BODY NUMBED BY BROKEN RIBS AND BATTERED NERVES...

MUST GET UP... **MUST...** HE'LL HAVE ME IF I DON'T...

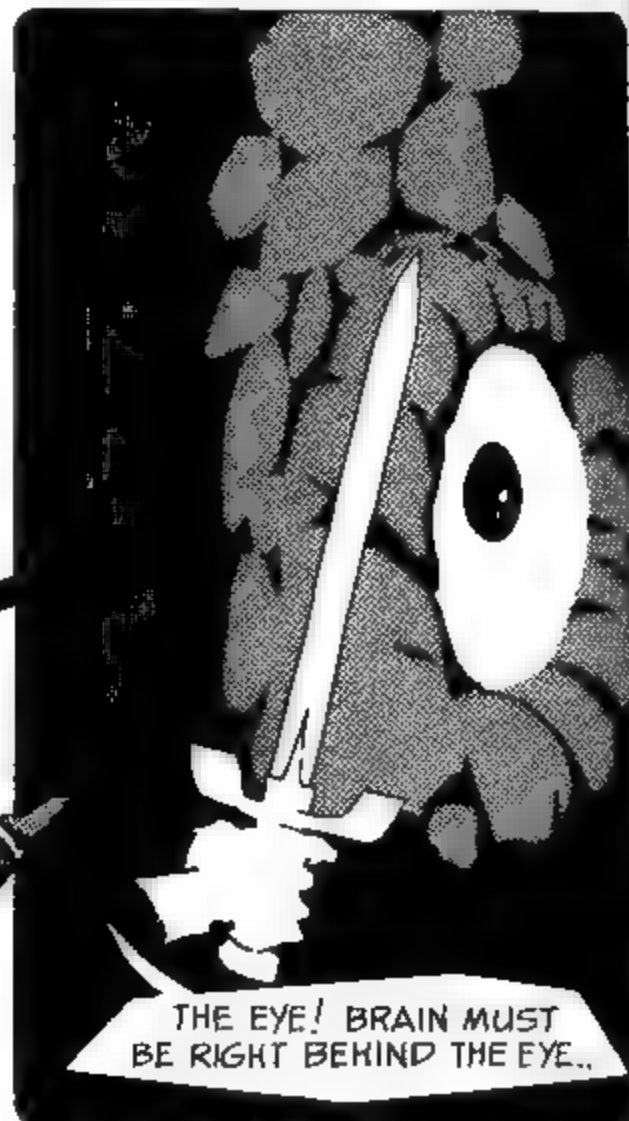


EVEN AS STUNNED FINGERS GRASPED HIS SWORD HILT, DRAWING FORTH THE BROAD GLISTENING BLADE, THE CREATURE'S MAMMOTH HEAD SLAMMED AGAINST HIM, SABRE-SHARP TEETH AND FANGS DRIVING FOR HIS UNDERSIDE...

WEAK SPOT... HAS TO HAVE A WEAK SPOT...



MOMENTUM AND INERTIA CARRIED HIM BACKWARD UNTIL COLD STONE BIT INTO HIS SPINE! THERE WAS NO PLACE LEFT TO GO AS THE MONSTER HEAD DASHED TOWARD HIM, ACID BREATH SEEMING TO SCORCH HIS VERY BODY...



THE EYE! BRAIN MUST BE RIGHT BEHIND THE EYE..



WITH THE LAST OUNCE OF FIGHTING STRENGTH IN HIS BATTERED BODY, THE KNIGHT'S FATIGUE-RIDDEN ARMS THRUST THE BLADE FORWARD TOWARD THE GLITTERING TARGET...

FOR SEEMINGLY HOURS THE CAVERN ECHOED WITH THE EAR-SHATTERING DEATH SHRIEK OF THE DRAGON UNTIL IT SEEMED THE VERY WALLS WOULD CRUMBLE FROM THE SOUND.. THEN, THERE WAS A TERRIBLE SILENCE.



IT... IT ISN'T **POSSIBLE!** H-HE WON... SLAYED THE HELL CREATURE!

YOU DID IT, SIRE... BUT AT WHAT COST? LOOK AT YOU! WEAK... BLEEDING... NEAR DEATH YOURSELF! I **WARNED** YOU!

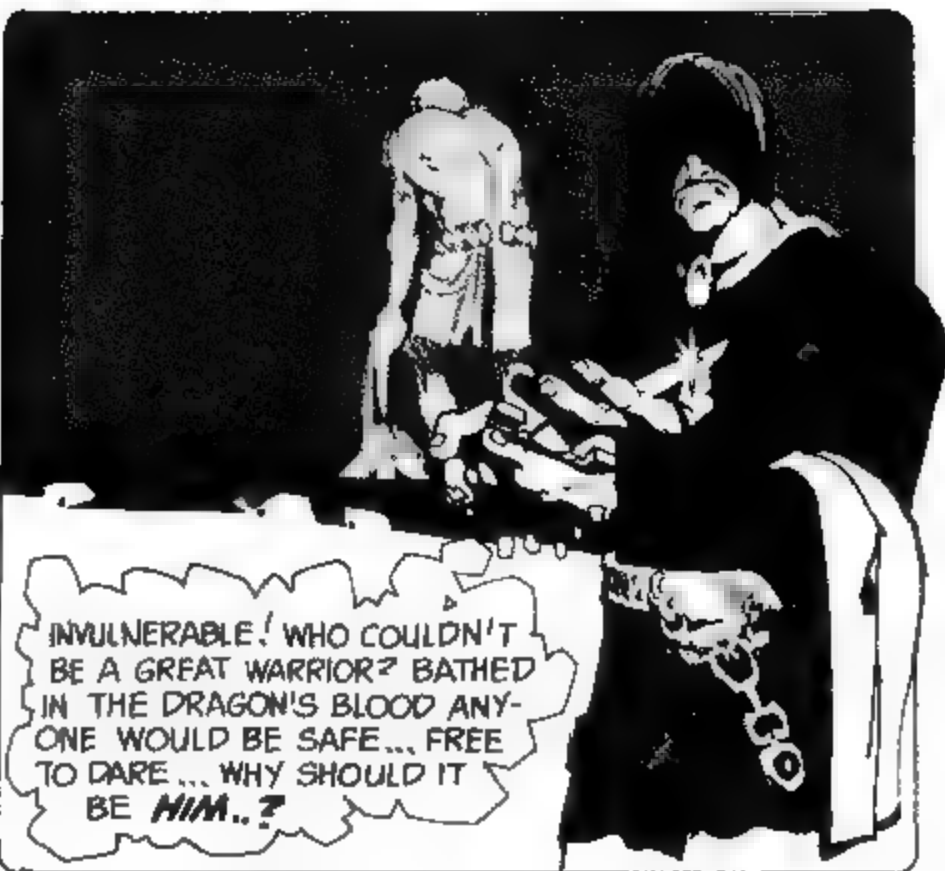
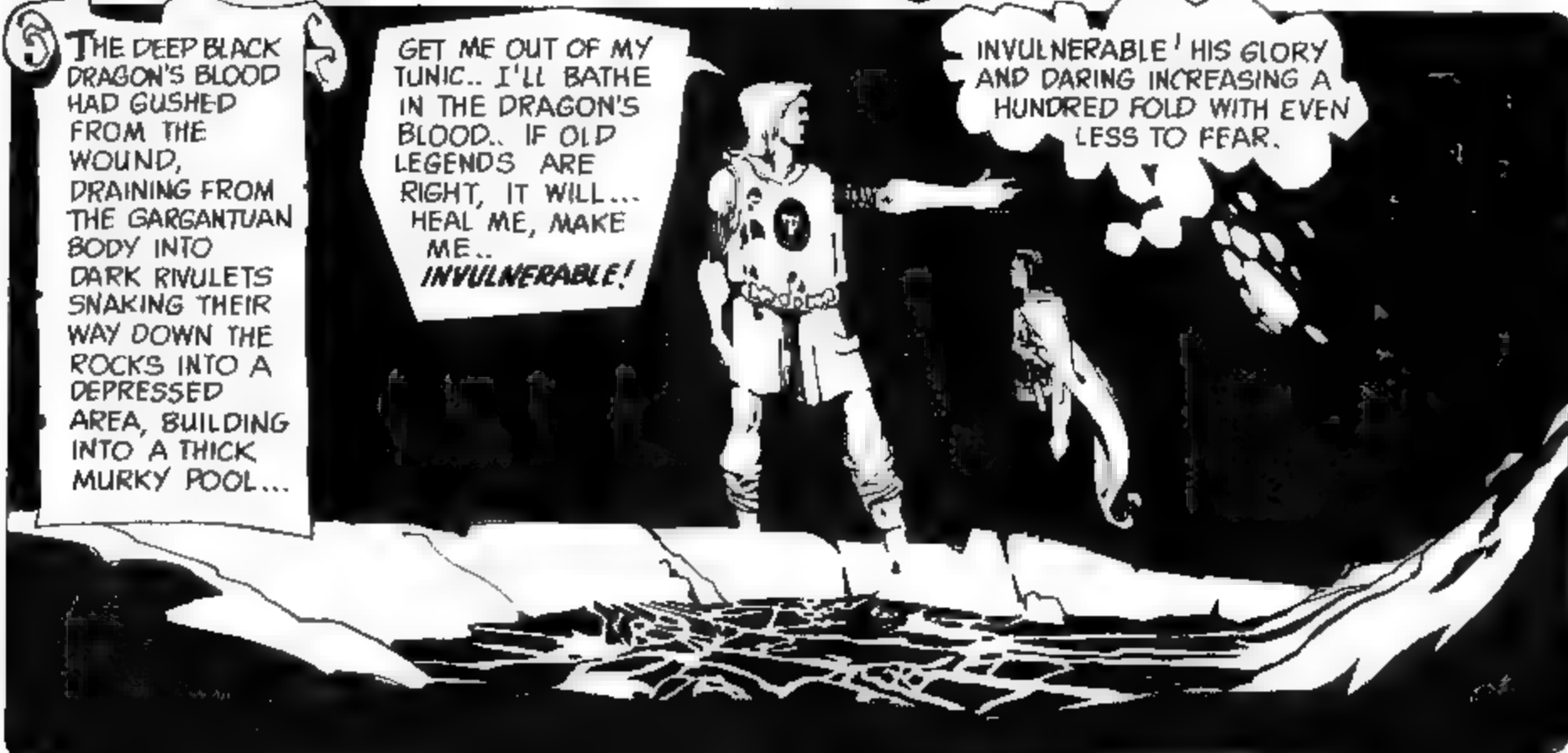


N-NO... THERE'S STILL HOPE.. I NEED YOUR HELP..

THE DEEP BLACK DRAGON'S BLOOD HAD GUSHED FROM THE WOUND, DRAINING FROM THE GARGANTUAN BODY INTO DARK RIVULETS SNAKING THEIR WAY DOWN THE ROCKS INTO A DEPRESSED AREA, BUILDING INTO A THICK MURKY POOL...

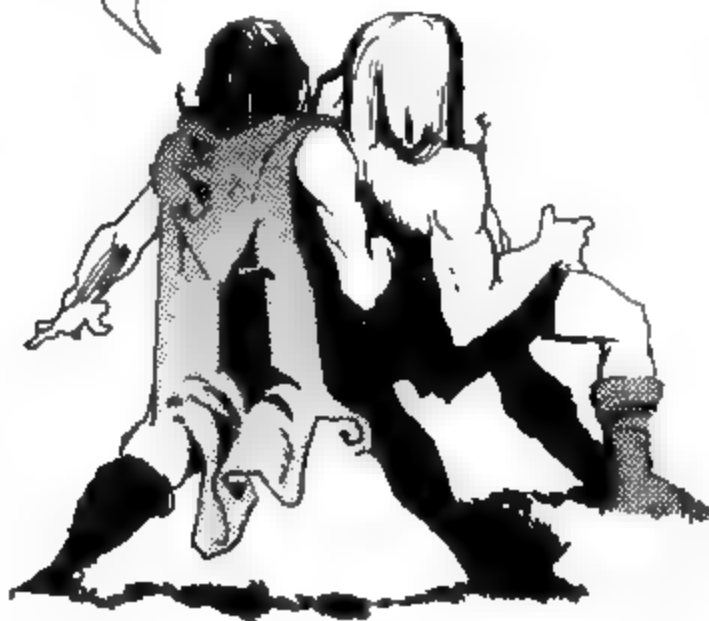
GET ME OUT OF MY TUNIC.. I'LL BATHE IN THE DRAGON'S BLOOD.. IF OLD LEGENDS ARE RIGHT, IT WILL... HEAL ME, MAKE ME... **INVULNERABLE!**

**INVULNERABLE!** HIS GLORY AND DARING INCREASING A HUNDRED FOLD WITH EVEN LESS TO FEAR.



**INVULNERABLE!** WHO COULDN'T BE A GREAT WARRIOR? BATHED IN THE DRAGON'S BLOOD ANYONE WOULD BE SAFE... FREE TO DARE... WHY SHOULD IT BE **HIM..?**

WHY NOT... **ME!!**





IGNORING THE TWO LIFELESS FORMS IN THE CAVERN, THE SQUIRE UNDRESSED HURRIEDLY AND PUSHED INTO THE THICK, DARK POOL... SUBMERGING HIS BODY INTO THE DEEP, BLACK LIQUID, ALLOWING IT TO COAT AND COVER HIM... ALREADY FEELING A STRANGE SENSATION AS IT TRICKLED FROM HIM...

GOT TO MAKE SURE I GET IT ALL OVER ME... MUSTN'T MISS A SPOT, LEAVE MYSELF UNPROTECTED... NO "ACHILLES HEEL"

THE SENSATION CONTINUED AFTER HE EMERGED AND DRESSED...

IT WORKS! MY SKIN'S HARD AS A ROCK! I'LL BE UNCONQUERABLE IN BATTLE... NO FOE CAN HARM ME!

AS HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE ROPE THEY HAD ENTERED WITH, THE SHARPNESS OF THE FEELING SEEMED TO INCREASE, AND SPREAD...

W-WHAT... MY HANDS! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM.. WHA—

EVERY JOINT, EVERY BONE IN THE SQUIRE'S BODY BEGAN TO ACHIE AND THROB, HIS SKIN SEEMED TO CAKE AND CRACK, GROWING THICKER AND HEAVIER BY THE SECOND...

OH, NO! I'M GROWING! GETTING LARGER... CHANGING! I'M BECOMING A... A...

NOTHING LIKE A BATH TO MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A NEW PERSON, EH, FRIGHT FANS? OF COURSE, THE SQUIRE ISN'T EXACTLY A PERSON NOW, NEW OR OTHERWISE... BUT WHAT'S A FEW SCALES AMONG FRIENDS? OH WELL, LET'S **DRAGON** TO OUR NEXT STORY...

OF COURSE BATHING IN THE DRAGON'S BLOOD MAKES YOU INVULNERABLE... BUT NONE OF THE LEGENDS EVER HINTED IT WAS BECAUSE YOU BECOME A DRAGON YOURSELF!  
NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!

3:00 A.M. THE RELENTLESS OCEAN SURF POUNDS A TATTOO AGAINST THE CLIFFS BELOW. AS A GROUP OF LAUGHING, CHATTERING GUESTS DEPART HAPPILY FROM THE LARGE ULTRA MODERN STRUCTURE SPRAWLING ATOP THE ROCK-FACED PINNACLES THEIR HIGH PRAISE AND GAY COMMENTS RIPPLING THROUGH THE NIGHT AIR. FOR A PARTY HAS ENDED HERE. BUT, IT'S REALLY ONLY THE BEGINNING OF MY TALE ABOUT THE MACABRE MASTERYWORK I CALL...

# THE MONUMENT



FANTASTIC! THE HOUSE IS TRULY AN ARCHITECTURAL MILESTONE!

PURE GENIUS!

EVAN SLATER IS BRILLIANT!

EVERYONE THOUGHT HIS FIRM WAS ON ITS WAY DOWN...

...NOW THEY'LL FIGHT TO AWARD HIM CONTRACTS!!

Max Toth

ONE YEAR EARLIER, THERE HAD BEEN NO PRAISE FOR EVAN SLATER ASSOCIATES!

THE DESIGN FIRM WAS IN TROUBLE!

JUNK! THE SAME PAP WE'VE BEEN PEDDLING FOR YEARS! I WANT IMAGINATION... AND DARING!!!

B BUT.. EVAN. OUR DESIGN DEPARTMENT'S WORKED FOR MONTHS! THIS IS OUR BEST!!!





THAT'S PRECISELY WHY WE'RE LOSING BUSINESS!! OUR 'BEST' JUST ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH ANYMORE! WE CAN'T SEEM TO COME UP WITH ANYTHING NEW... DIFFERENT!!!

BUT THIS PLAN OF YOURS, EVAN... HOW DO YOU JUSTIFY WASTING OUR DWINDLING CAPITAL BY BUILDING A PRIVATE HOME FOR YOU?!!



CAN'T YOU GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEADS?!! IT'LL BE A SHOWPLACE! OURS! THE FIRM'S! EXHIBITING OUR DESIGN TALENT...

A HUNK OF ARCHITECTURE SO GREAT THAT OUR FIRM'S REPUTATION WILL BE REMADE BY IT!!...

SO, KEEP LOOKING... FOR THE NEW, THE BOLD, DARING, BRILLIANT! AND DON'T SETTLE FOR LESS THAN THAT... BECAUSE I WON'T!!!



THERE WAS NO EASY SOLUTION... SLATER KEPT ON WITH HIS OWN DESPERATE SEARCH... ANYWHERE... AND EVERYWHERE...

WHAT'S THIS?!! WHO DO THESE BELONG TO?!!

ROGER'S BEEN CLEANING OUT THE OLD PLAN FILES AND STORAGE BINS, EVAN! SOME OF THAT STUFF'S BEEN AROUND FOR FIFTEEN TWENTY YEARS...!



UNBELIEVABLE!! EXACTLY THE TREATMENT..THE FLAIR. I WANT! CHARLES LANGTON COLT!...I- I REMEMBER NOW... MANY YEARS AGO... AN OLD CODGER WITH FAR-OUT IDEAS... AND NOBODY WOULD USE HIM!



WHEREVER HE WAS... THE OLD MAN HAD TO BE FOUND! HAD TO BE ALIVE!...

CHARLES LANGTON COLT, YOU'RE GOING TO DESIGN MY DREAMHOUSE... AND I WON'T TAKE 'NO' FOR AN ANSWER!!



NO, MR. SLATER !!!

LISTEN TO ME, COLT! YOU'RE DYING AWAY IN THIS FLEABAG HOTEL ROOM! WASTING YOUR TALENT ON BALSA WOOD MODELS! NO ONE WILL EVER SEE! HOW CAN YOU - ?

I VOWED A LONG TIME AGO, TO WORK ONLY FOR MYSELF! NO ONE ELSE APPRECIATES MY WORK... !!!



SLATER'S HAND WORKED QUICKLY... HE HAD TO HAVE COLT'S WORK!

SURE! IT'LL BECOME AN ARCHITECTURAL SHRINE! THE HOME OF CHARLES LANGTON COLT...

I'M OLD, SLATER... MY HEALTH, FAILING RAPIDLY... BUT SINCE THIS LENDS ITSELF TO A PROJECT I'VE LONG HAD IN MIND... I'LL DO IT !!!

THEN LET IT BE YOURS! MY FIRM WILL PUT UP THE MONEY... BUILD IT JUST THE WAY YOU WANT!! TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS! A MONUMENT TO YOUR GENIUS !!!

MONUMENT?...



SO, IT BEGAN... A DYING OLD MAN, RACING AGAINST DEATH... TO COMPLETE HIS LIFE-LONG DREAM...

IT'S GOING TO BE TOUGH BUILDING... BUT IT'S A HONEY OF A SPOT!

I'VE PLANNED FOR EVERYTHING... THE HOUSE WILL BE... AH... TOTAL... FULFILL EVERY NEED!...





LATER PUSHED...  
PUSHED AS HE'D  
NEVER PUSHED  
BEFORE... TO WIND  
UP THIS EXCITING  
PROJECT...

HAVE YOU SEEN **EVERYTHING**  
THE PLANS CALL FOR? I'VE BEEN  
IN CONSTRUCTION FOR THIRTY  
YEARS, BUT I'VE NEVER...

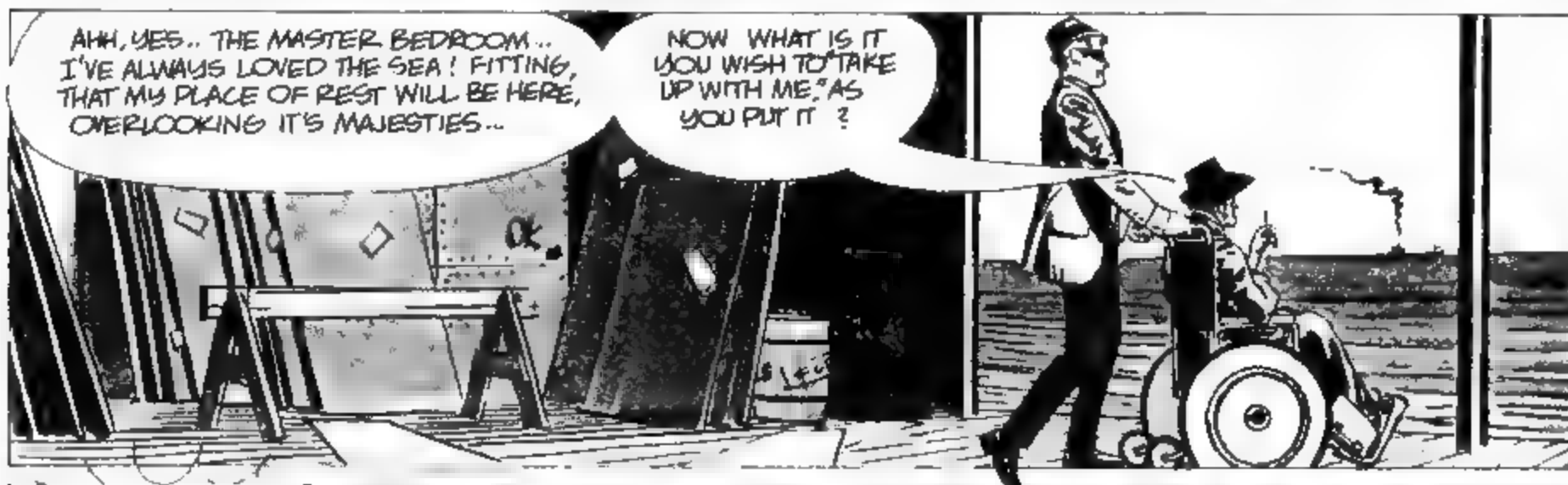
JUST DO IT!... DON'T  
QUESTION **GENIUS!!!**



THE HOUSE TOOK FORM  
AND WAS NEARING ITS  
COMPLETION... **ALL** OF  
COLT'S REQUIREMENTS  
WERE BEING MET...

IT'S GOING **PERFECTLY!** THE CONSTRUCTION  
CREW DOESN'T REALLY NEED **ME** UNDERFOOT  
ANYMORE...! SHOULDN'T YOU BE KICKING OFF  
OUR PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION ABOUT NOW..?

THERE'S **STILL** A FEW  
POINTS I WANT TO TAKE  
UP WITH YOU BEFORE I  
GET TO **THAT!**



AHH, YES... THE MASTER BEDROOM...  
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED THE SEA! FITTING,  
THAT MY PLACE OF REST WILL BE HERE,  
OVERLOOKING ITS MAJESTIES...

NOW WHAT IS IT  
YOU WISH TO TAKE  
UP WITH ME, AS  
YOU PUT IT?



JUST. **THIS!!!**



THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT WAS NOT GIVEN WIDE-SPREAD PUBLICITY... PROMOTION WAS QUITE VOLUMINOUS, HOWEVER, ON EVAN SLATER AND HIS NEW "DREAM HOUSE"!

BY THE TIME OF HIS HOUSE WARMING GALA, NO ONE COULD EVEN REMEMBER, IN PASSING, THE NAME CHARLES LANGSTON COLT...

EVERY NOTABLE IN THE WORLD OF ARCHITECTURE IS HERE TONIGHT ———!

AFTER TONIGHT, THERE'S ONLY ONE NOTABLE IN THE DESIGN WORLD. EVAN SLATER !!!

THE GALA ENDED ALMOST TOO SOON FOR ONE VERY ELATED MR. SLATER...

WHAT A BRAWL! THE FIRM'LL BE SWAMPED WITH COMMISSIONS FROM NOW ON. THEY LOVED THE HOUSE... !!!

FANTASTIC WORK, THIS!

MAVELOUS

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING AS DARING!

... AND WHY NOT? COLT THOUGHT OF **EVERYTHING!** AUTOMATIC LIGHTS, DOORS, CLIMATE CONTROLS. THE HOUSE OF THE FUTURE !!!

BEDROOM DOORS HISSED SHUT BEHIND HIM WITH A CLICK!

SOUNDPROOF BEDROOM... OCEAN VIEW. CHARLES LANGSTON COLT DIDN'T OMIT A THING! .

GREAT NIGHT! I'VE EARNED A LONG REST!



SLATER'S HEAD HAD BARELY TOUCHED THE PILLOW WHEN A WHIR OF SOLENOID ACTIVATED CONTROLS WAS HEARD...AND...

WHAT...?!

CLICK! SSSSSSSSS  
CHARLES LANGTON COLT SPEAKING...THIS IS A RECORDING!...

WALL PANELS OPENED BEHIND SLATER... ODD, ALMOST SINISTER MACHINERY, NOW SET INTO MOTION, WAS REVEALED...

HELP! SOMEBODY HELP GET ME LOOSE!

CLICK! IT IS PROGRAMMED FOR NON-STOP RE-PLAYING UNTIL I AM FOUND, AND THIS RECORDER IS SHUT OFF!...



FROM EACH SIDE OF THE BED, TWO MECHANICAL "ARMS" CAME INTO VIEW... MOVING UP, AND THEN TOWARDS SLATER'S CAPTIVE FORM...

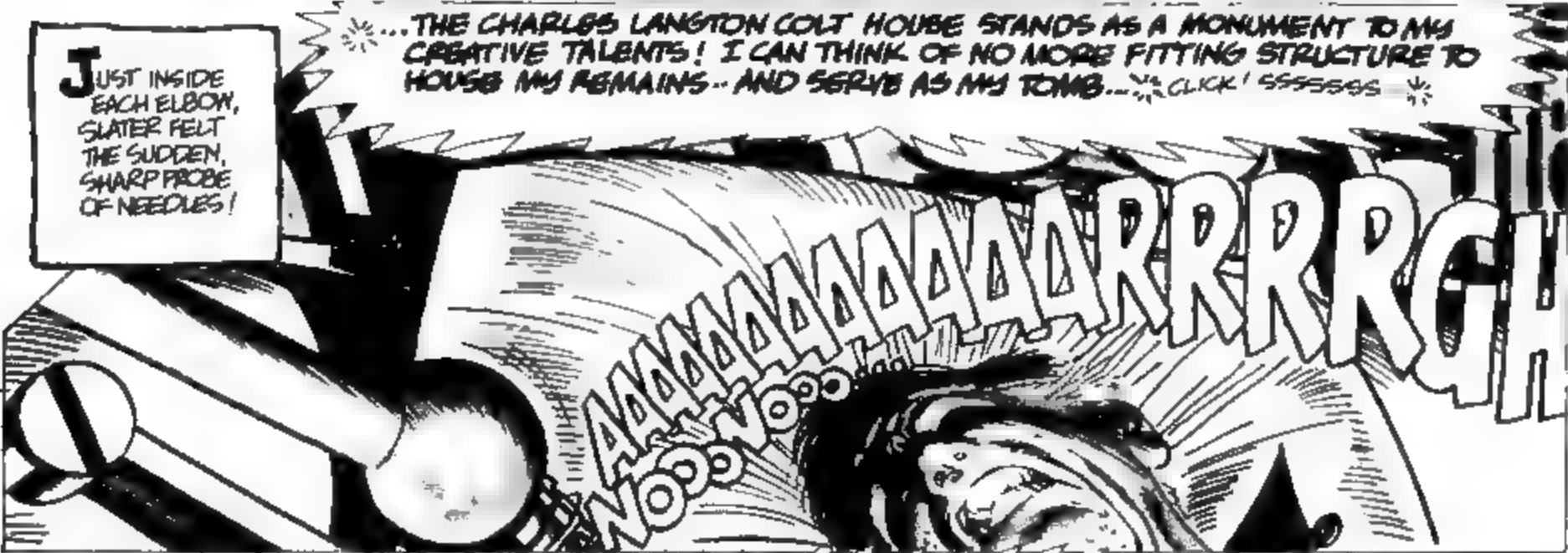
...THE COMPLETION OF THIS HOUSE MARKS THE CULMINATION OF ALL MY DREAMS... I'VE NO DESIRE TO OUTLIVE IT... AND, THUS...

YE GODS! COLT BUILT IN HIS OWN EMBALMING MACHINE!!!



JUST INSIDE EACH ELBOW, SLATER FELT THE SUDDEN, SHARP PROBE OF NEEDLES!

...THE CHARLES LANGTON COLT HOUSE STANDS AS A MONUMENT TO MY CREATIVE TALENTS! I CAN THINK OF NO MORE FITTING STRUCTURE TO HOUSE MY REMAINS... AND SERVE AS MY TOMB... CLICK! SSSSSSS



EVAN SLATER FELL BACK, HELPLESSLY, AS HIS LIFE'S BLOOD DRAINED SLOWLY FROM HIS BODY...

THE ROOM SPUN WILDLY ABOUT HIM, AS HIS FAST-DIMINISHING CONSCIOUSNESS ABSORBED COLT'S LAST WORDS...

CLICK! SSSSSSS MY TOMB... CLICK! SSSSSSS MY TOMB... CLICK! SSSSSSS MY TOMB... CLICK! SSSSSSS MY TOMB...

SHHH PUM  
SHHH PUM  
SHHH PUM

BUILDING COLT'S HOUSE WAS A BIG DRAIN ON EVAN SLATER, TO BE SURE BUT HE'S GOT AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF TIME TO REST UP!

NOW, IF YOU'RE TOO SHOOK UP TO REST, TAKE A LOOK AT THE NEXT L.I.L. CHILLER I'VE CONSTRUCTED FOR YOU!



END

Come on, Fear Fanciers,  
let's get in out of the storm...  
We can take shelter in that rather  
sinister-looking old mansion ahead...  
Though I should warn you some  
rather odd things go on in there...  
Things that make you want to...

CRY  
FEAR  
CRY

THERE IT IS, SWEETHEART... **HOLLOWAY HOUSE**  
IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT UNCLE BEN AND I CALL IT HOME!

COM'ON! LET'S HURRY  
BEFORE WE DROWN!

JIM! IT'S LIKE  
A GOTHIC NOVEL  
COME TO LIFE..  
ARE YOU SURE  
IT'S ALL RIGHT?  
SHOULDN'T WE  
HAVE PHONED...

HEY UNCLE  
BEN! OPEN UP!  
THE PRODIGAL  
RETURNS...  
HEY, COM'ON!  
I LIVE HERE,  
REMEMBER?

THERE'S SOMEONE  
WITH YOU...

YOU BET THERE IS! THIS IS EDITH... I DRAGGED HER ALL THE WAY UP FROM THE CITY TO VISIT THE OL' HOMESTEAD. SHE'S MY FIANCEE! NOW QUIT PLAYING DRACULA AND LET US IN!

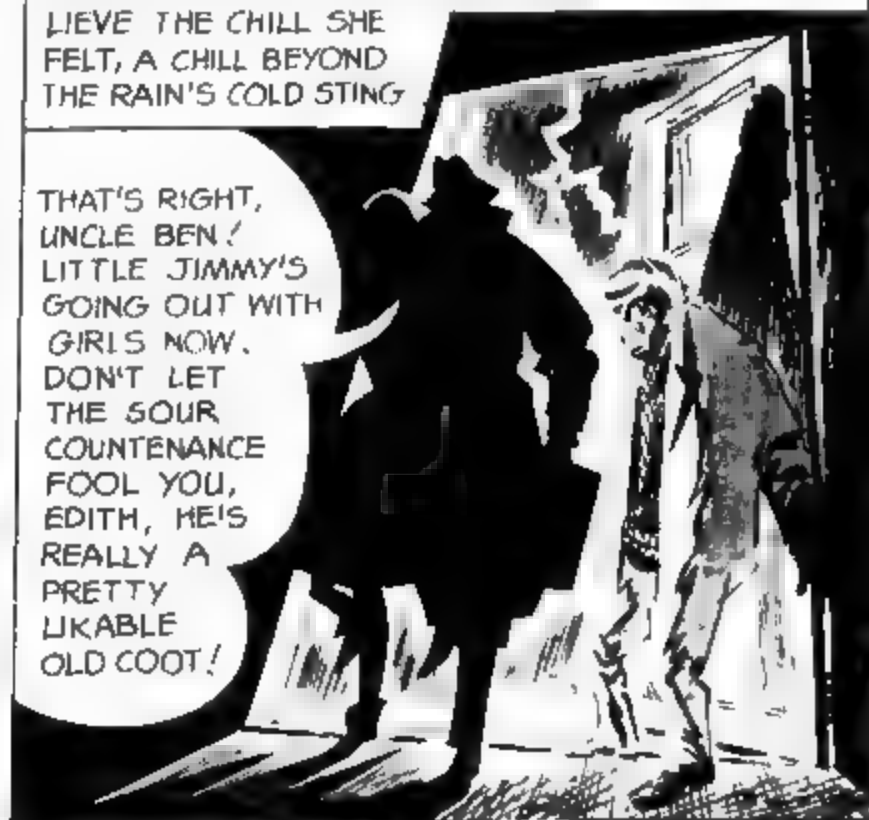


YOU BROUGHT A GIRL HERE?



FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE SHE AND JIM HAD IMPULSIVELY MADE THE DRIVE, EDITH FELT REGRET. BEING INSIDE THE HOUSE DID NOTHING TO RELIEVE THE CHILL SHE FELT, A CHILL BEYOND THE RAIN'S COLD STING

THAT'S RIGHT, UNCLE BEN! LITTLE JIMMY'S GOING OUT WITH GIRLS NOW. DON'T LET THE SOUR COUNTENANCE FOOL YOU, EDITH, HE'S REALLY A PRETTY LIKABLE OLD COOT!



MR. HOLLOWAY, I'M REALLY QUITE SORRY TO INTRUDE LIKE THIS. I WANTED JIM TO LET YOU KNOW AHEAD, BUT HE WOULDN'T HEAR OF IT.

WOULDN'T HAVE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE. THERE'S PLACES I FIGURE NO WOMAN BELONGS. THIS HOUSE IS ONE OF THEM!



IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, MISSY, YOU'LL RUN OUTSIDE TO THAT CAR AND LEAVE HERE JUST AS FAST AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN!



THERE! THAT'S OUT OF THE WAY! NOTHING TO DO NOW, BUT RELAX AND ENJOY OURSELVES! RIGHT?





THE EVENING MOVED AT AN AGONIZING SNAIL'S PACE FOR EDITH, TORTURED BY THE MENACING SILENCE OF UNCLE BEN, YET UNABLE TO SPOIL THINGS FOR JIM BY MENTIONING IT. BACK IN THE CITY SHE'D BE ABLE TO TALK WITH HIM, BUT HERE IN THIS HOUSE, SHE FELT HELPLESS, ISOLATED, REMOVED.

I THINK I'M READY TO CALL IT A NIGHT HOW 'BOUT THE REST OF YOU?

YOUR ROOM'S AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS, DARLING. YOU'LL NEED THE LAMP... STORM'S PUT THE ELECTRICITY ON THE BLINK...



WITH A KISS, JIM LEFT HER, AND EDITH STARTED SLOWLY UP THE SHADOW-ENSHROUDED STAIRS, THEN STOPPED. AHEAD OF THE LAMP'S GLOW WAS THE PITCH-BLACK LANDING... SOMETHING ABOUT IT MADE HER HESITATE

WHO...

I- IS SOMEONE UP THERE? PLEASE WHO'S THERE? WHO...



EDITH! DARLING... WHAT'S WRONG?

OH, JIM... THE LANDING... SOMETHING H-HORRIBLE WAS ON IT...





NOTHING  
UP HERE  
NOW.  
PROBABLY  
THE STORM  
AND THIS  
OLD HOUSE  
WORKING  
ON YOUR  
NERVES

IT SEEMED SO REAL...  
THAT GIRL, HORRIBLY  
MUTILATED... LONG  
BLONDE HAIR SWIRLING  
IN THE WIND...

BLONDE  
HAIR!



CAN'T BE NO HERE...  
IMPOSSIBLE CAN'T BE

SEE NOW YOU EVEN  
GOT OL' UNCLE BEN  
SHOOK UP! BEST  
THING TO DO IS FOR-  
GET THE WHOLE THING  
...TRY TO SLEEP.

FOR A TIME, TERRIFYING THOUGHTS KEYED HER NERVES, KEPT HER ON EDGE... BUT AT LAST THE TERROR OF HER SURROUNDINGS FLED, HER EYES GREW HEAVY. THEN, THERE WAS A SLIGHT SOUND AT THE DOOR.



CREEEEEEAK!

J-JIM -  
IS THAT  
YOU?

CREEEAK!

MR.  
HOLLOWAY..?

NO!  
DEAR GOD!

NO  
NO!  
NO!

EDITH COULD NOT MOVE, COULD NOT SCREAM, ONLY CLENCH HER EYES TIGHTLY SHUT... AFTER LONG HEART-POUNDING MOMENTS, SHE REOPENED THEM...

**GONE!** AS THOUGH SHE WERE NEVER THERE... BUT I **SAW** IT! I'M SURE I DID.

SHE SEEMED TO BE POINTING THIS TIME. THIS DIRECTION...TOWARD THE WINDOW

**...UNCLE BEN!**

THAT HOLE HE'S DIGGING...SO LARGE...NEARLY THE SIZE OF A...A.

THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE...DIGGING UP THE SHRUBBERY

THE OLD MAN STOPPED DIGGING, STARING DOWN AT WHAT HE'D UNCOVERED. HIS FACE IN THE YELLOW LANTERN GLOW, A MIXED MASK OF REVULSION AND RELIEF...

**...GRAVE!**

EVEN FROM THE WINDOW WITH THE NEXT FLASH OF LIGHTNING, EDITH COULD SEE THE LOATHESOME THING THAT HELD UNCLE BEN'S GAZE. SHE COULD SEE IT IN ALL DETAIL, DOWN TO THE LONG STRANDS OF BLONDE HAIR STILL CLINGING TO THE DECAYING SKULL.

THE BODY OF THE APPARITION I'VE BEEN SEEING...SHE'S BEEN TRYING TO TELL ME...WARN ME...



THE SHEER HORROR OF PREVIOUS EVENTS MINGLED WITH THE DRIVING WHIRL OF HER OWN TERRIBLE THOUGHTS, ALL BURST FORTH IN ONE LONG CULMINATING SCREAM...



...EASILY HEARD, EVEN OUTSIDE ABOVE THE SWEEPING LASH OF THE STORM...



EDITH TURNED FROM THE WINDOW, ONE THOUGHT IN HER MIND: RUN! FIND JIM! BUT EVEN AS SHE THOUGHT IT, EVEN AS HER MOUTH FLEW OPEN TO SCREAM, TERROR CLAIMED HER. HER KNEES BUCKLED AND SHE SANK DIZZILY INTO OBLIVION.



SLOWLY, LITTLE BY LITTLE CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNED.

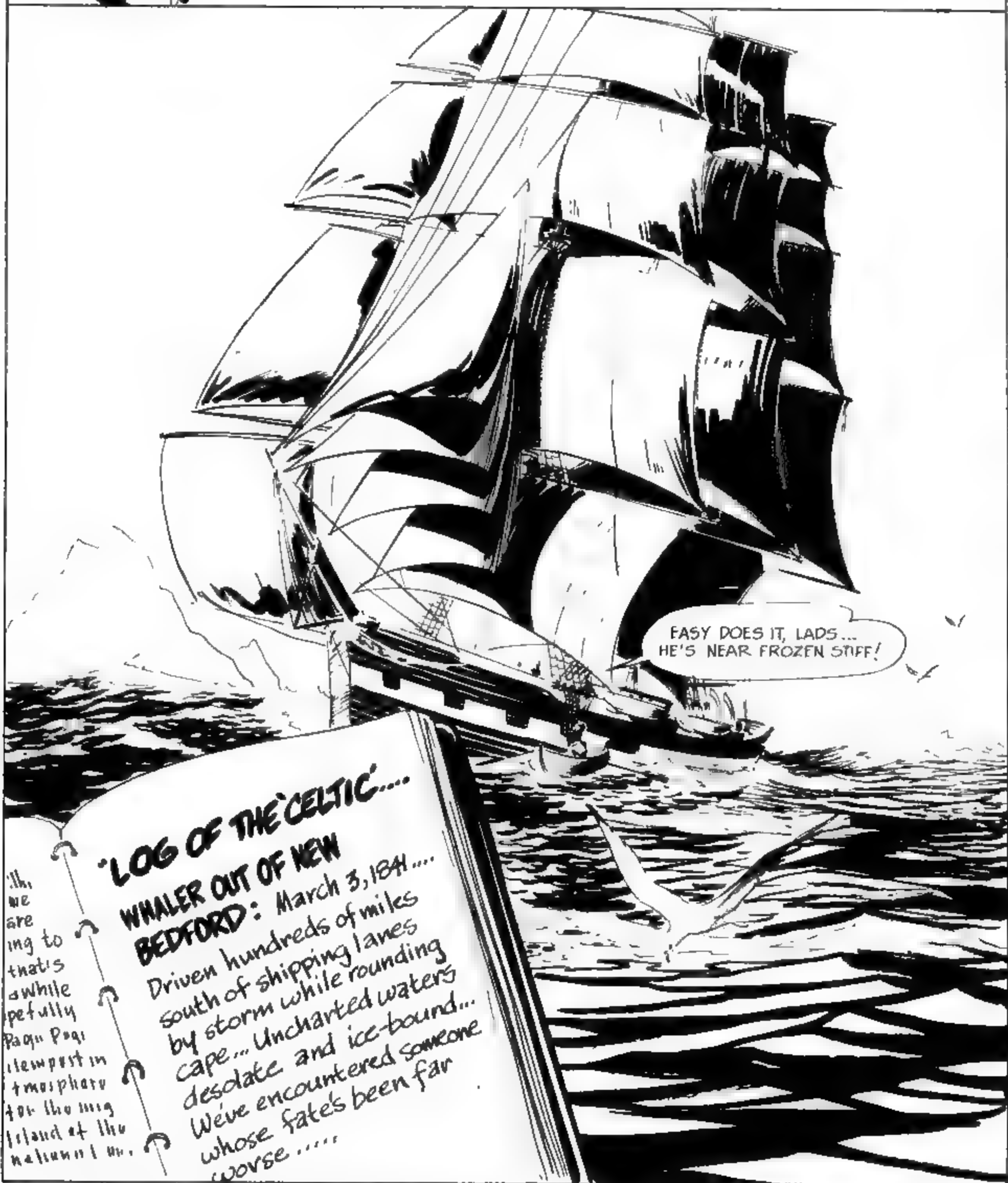
...GOT TO...  
RUN... GET  
JIM... GOT TO...





SEARCHING FOR ANOTHER **GORY-STORY**, FEAR FANS? LET ME BE YOUR **GHOUL**  
**GUIDE** INTO THE UNCHARTED WATERS OF THE WEIRD AS WE GO EXPLORING FOR  
EXCITEMENT AND END UP ON THE ...

# ISLAND AT WORLD'S END!



## 'LOG OF THE 'CELTIC''....

WHALER OUT OF NEW  
BEDFORD: March 3, 1841....

Driven hundreds of miles  
south of shipping lanes  
by storm while rounding  
cape... Uncharted waters  
desolate and ice-bound...  
We've encountered someone  
whose fate's been far  
worse .....

ill,  
we  
are  
ing to  
that's  
a while  
pefully  
Paqu Paqi  
tempest in  
tmosphere  
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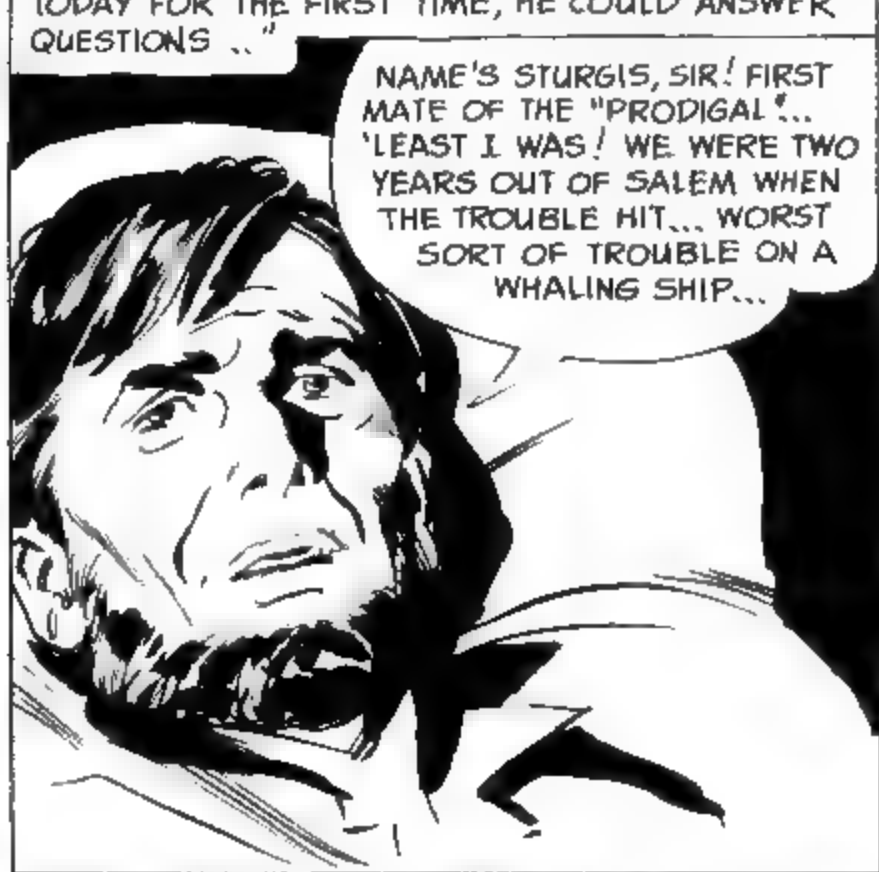
"HE WAS A LARGE MAN, AND STRONG TO HAVE BEEN LESS, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD..."

AIN'T NATURAL... ADRIFT IN AN OPEN BOAT IN WATERS LIKE THESE!



"MARCH 6--OUR PASSENGER IS RECOVERING... TODAY FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE COULD ANSWER QUESTIONS..."

NAME'S STURGIS, SIR! FIRST MATE OF THE "PRODIGAL"... 'LEAST I WAS! WE WERE TWO YEARS OUT OF SALEM WHEN THE TROUBLE HIT... WORST SORT OF TROUBLE ON A WHALING SHIP...



"...MUTINY!"



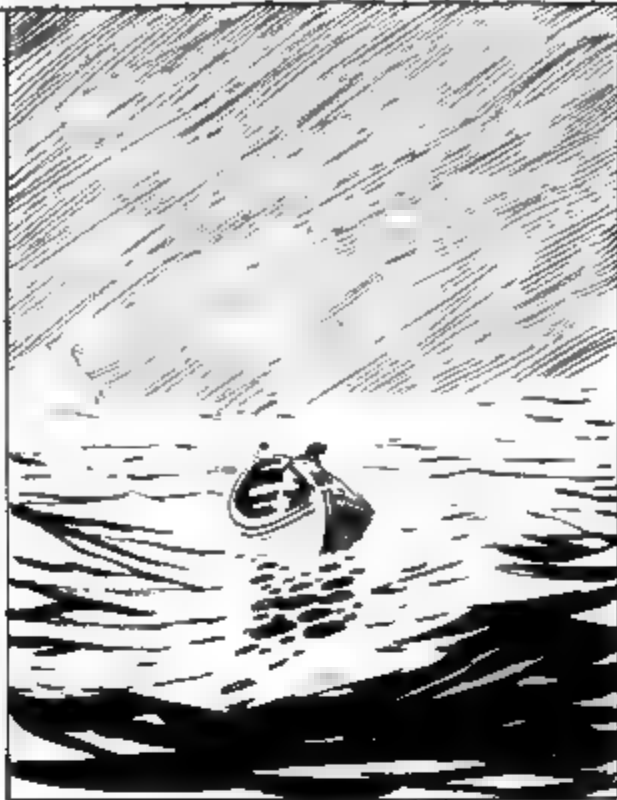
"THE CAPTAIN WAS KILLED AND WE THREE REMAINING OFFICERS SET ADRIFT WITH A FEW SUPPLIES.. I MANAGED TO SNEAK OFF MY PISTOL..."



"IN TIME WE BECAME ANIMALS... RAGING FOR SURVIVAL, THE OPEN BOAT OUR JUNGLE! FOR THE OTHERS, REASON FAILED... FOR ME, THE PISTOL DIDN'T..."



"THEN BEGAN THE AWFUL DRIFTING... SLOWLY, STEADILY... **SOUTH!** SOUTH TOWARD UNKNOWN WATERS... SOUTH TOWARD ICE AND SILENCE... SOUTH TOWARD THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD!"



"BUNDLED IN THE CLOTHING OF DEAD MEN... LIVING MEAGERLY ON THEIR FOOD SHARES... I DRIFTED! BUT EVEN DRIFTING THINGS CAN REACH A DESTINATION... AND SO I REACHED THE ISLAND!"



"COLD, DESOLATE, LONELY... LIKE A LAST STOP BEFORE ETERNITY! NOT MUCH, BUT ALL THAT WAS LEFT ME... I BEGAN TO EXPLORE..."



"MY SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF LIFE LED ME TO OTHER SIGNS... OF DEATH!"



BONES LOOKED TO HAVE BEEN GNAWED BY SOME KIND OF ANIMAL... SKULLS APPEAR... H-HUMAN!



"I'VE SEEN THE WILDEST SAVAGES OF OUR WESTERN PLAINS AND THE GREAT APES OF AFRICA'S JUNGLES... THIS WAS NEITHER.. AND I WAS BOTH! BUT THERE WAS NO TIME FOR CURIOSITY.."



"AND NO CHANCE TO USE THE PISTOL AGAIN. SHRIEKING AND SCREAMING WITH BEAST-LIKE FEROCITY, THEY CHARGED!"



"A HAIRY, OBSCENE TIDE SWEEPED OVER... MY LAST THOUGHT WAS OF THE GNAWED WHITE BONES BENEATH MY FEET!"





"FUMES OF SULPHUR AND PRICKLES OF HEAT FORCED MY SWIRLING MIND TO CONSCIOUSNESS..."

I'M INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN...  
OR IS IT A VOLCANO? THOSE  
THINGS I WAS FIGHTING  
MUST HAVE LEFT ME  
HERE... **WHY?**



"MY PISTOL WAS THROWN IN WITH ME, YET I DREW LITTLE COMFORT FROM IT..."

DON'T LIKE THESE  
IDOLS! MAKE THE  
LEDGE LOOK  
LIKE ...

**A PLACE OF  
SACRIFICE!**



DOWN BELOW!  
SOMETHING'S  
STIRRING...



**IMPOSSIBLE!**  
HOW CAN SHE ...



"WHAT THE MIND CANNOT COMPREHEND, IT SOMETIMES SHUTS OUT... ONLY A MELODIC SOFT VOICE PULLED ME FROM THE BLACK BARRIER IT HAD THROWN UP..."

I WENT FORTH FOR A SACRIFICE, BUT FIND INSTEAD A PRINCE!



I AM CTHYLLA, LAST OF THE GREAT ELDER RACE... HIGH PRIESTESS OF DREAD SHOGGATH!



RUINS OF AN OLD CITY... HIDDEN AWAY IN THIS MOUNTAIN...

IT WAS NOT ALWAYS SO! THE GREAT WARS.. THE MIGHTY SNOWS... WE WERE DRIVEN UNDERGROUND! SOME REMAINED... DEGENERATED INTO BEASTS... THE HAIRY ONES ABOVE!



THEY ADAPTED WHILE YOUR PEOPLE DIED OUT DOWN HERE.

WHILE I LIVE, THE ELDERS MAY LIVE... LONG HAVE I PRAYED TO SHOGGATH FOR ONE TO SHARE MY DESTINY... MY THRONE... MY LIFE!



'HER EYES LOCKED WITH MINE... FLIRTING, I FELT... SUDDENLY I COULD NO LONGER SEE ANYTHING BUT HER CTHYLLA!'

... THE ELDER RACE SHALL THRIVE AGAIN!









"THIS TIME NO MERCIFUL FAINT OBLITERATED MY VISION! *THIS TIME I SAW ALL!*"

*FEAST, SHOGGATH, FEAST!*  
REAP THE SWEETS OF  
YOUR GREATNESS! *FEAST,*  
ALL-POWERFUL GOD!

DIFFERENT AS IT  
WAS, IT WAS A  
HUMAN CREATURE!  
HOW CAN SHE FIND  
SUCH JOY!



"EVEN AS I LEAPED I KNEW IT WAS NO ACCIDENT THE MEN-CREATURES HAD PLACED ME ON THE LEDGE... LEFT ME THE PISTOL..."

*I'LL BE NO PART  
OF A LIFE LIKE  
THIS!*



"IN THE THUNDER OF THE WEAPON, THEY HAD SEEN A GLIMMER OF HOPE AGAINST SHOGGATH... EVEN AS I DESPERATELY DID!"

*SHOGGATH! BRING  
HIM BACK! BRING  
HIM BACK TO ME!*



"BUT IT WAS NOT THE BEHEMOTH THAT FELL..."



"I DID NOT HEAR HER SCREAM, NOR DID I LOOK BACK IN MY FRANTIC SCRAMBLE FOR FREEDOM. BEHIND ME A MOURNFUL WAIL ROSE IN PITCH TO A DREADFUL RUMBLE ..."



"FEAR DROVE MY LEGS DOWN THAT SLOPE OF ROCK AND ICE... NOTHING BROKE MY FLIGHT!"



"WHAT HAD BEEN A RUMBLE SPLIT THROUGH THE AIR NOW LIKE AN EXPLOSION! IN HIS GRIEF AND RAGE WAS SHOGGATH BREAKING FREE OF THE CRATER? AS I REACHED THE BOAT, NO DESIRE MOVED ME TO SEE... I PUSHED OFF PREFERING THE SLOW FREEZING DEATH AHEAD TO THE MONSTROUS INSANITY THAT STORMED BEHIND!"



DO YOU BELIEVE, CAPTAIN? CAN THESE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO ME?

I BELIEVE THE MIND OF A FREEZING, SLOWLY DYING MAN CAN MAKE ANYTHING POSSIBLE... YOU SHOULD REST...



AFTER DAYS ADRIFT, I THOUGHT THAT TOO, BUT I KEEP SEEING HER EYES... LOCKED DEEP IN MINE... PROMISING A WORLD... CTHYLLA...





"MARCH 10-- STURGIS HAS RECOVERED, YET HE PROWLs THE DECKs MOODY AND QUIET, STARING AT THE SEA AS THOUGH LOOKING FOR SOMETHING..."

MAN, YOU'VE GOT TO GET HOLD OF YOURSELF... YOU

SHE BLOWS!  
SHE BLOWS!



THAT'S NO WHALE'S SPOUT! IT'S STEAM... MIST! GETTING CLOSER!



HE'S COME... I KNEW HE MUST!



CTHYLLA!

STURGIS... YOU FOOL! NO!



DESPITE THE HORROR, HE DIED SILENTLY. LATER, THE CREW LIKED TO THINK HE DID IT TO SAVE THE SHIP... NO MATTER... BUT IN THE ONLY WAY LEFT HIM, STURGIS HAD GONE BACK... BACK TO CTHYLLA!



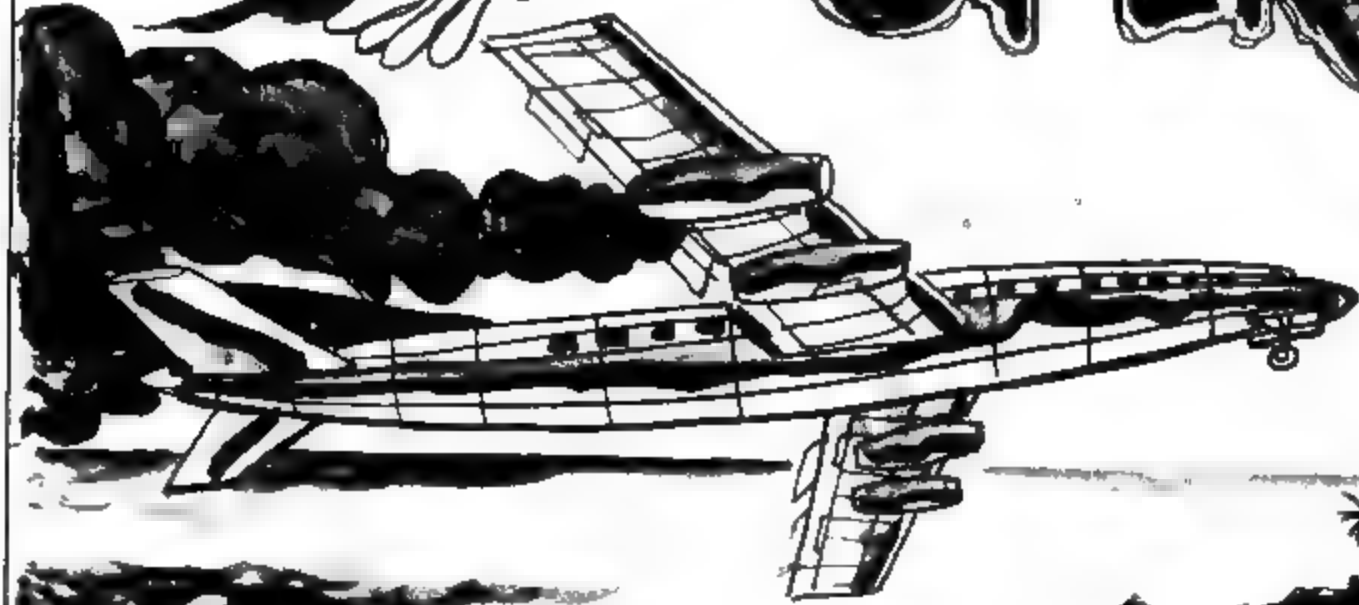
WHAT HAPPENED TO GOOD OL' SHOGGATH? NO ONE KNOWS, HE WAS NEVER CAUGHT... BUT IF HE IS, YOU CAN REST ASSURED IT WILL BE RED-HANDED! AND YOU'LL BE RED-FACED IF YOU MISS MY NEXT STORY!





THIS PLANE IS IN TROUBLE! BUT NOT FOR LONG! THE PLANE WILL LAND SAFELY ON A SMALL ISLAND. THEN THE PEOPLE IN THE PLANE WILL BE IN TROUBLE THIS ISLAND'S SOLE INHABITANT IS A...

# BIG-TIME OPERATOR!



ONLY EIGHT PERSONS ABOARD SURVIVED... THE REST WERE LUCKY!

DAN FIELDING, CO-PILOT...



VIOLA GRAVES STEWARDESS...



GRANT HARDING WESTERN MOVIE STAR...



SYLVIA PENN, HOLLYWOOD SEX-QUEEN...



ALICE PALMER, BRITISH SWIMMING CHAMPION...



MARGARET DAVIS, A SCHOOLTEACHER...



DR. HERMANN MEISTER, A PSYCHIATRIST...



AND DR. WILHELMINA STERN, A TOP WOMAN SURGEON!

HOURS LATER, DR. STERN IS FIRST TO AWAKEN...

W-WHERE AM I?

YOU ARE IN MY HOME! I AM DOCTOR FELIX WARNER. ONLY EIGHT OF THE PERSONS ABOARD SURVIVED... AND YOU ALONE ESCAPED BEING BADLY MANGLED!

BUT DON'T WORRY... ALL OF YOU ARE IN GOOD HANDS! FOR INSTANCE, YOU WERE **SCALPED**, BUT I REPLACED YOUR LOST HAIR!

YOU... SEWED MY SCALP BACK ON?

NO... **THAT** WAS IMPOSSIBLE! NEVERTHELESS, USING MY OWN MEDICAL TECHNIQUES, I HAVE REPLACED IT! AS I'VE TAKEN CARE OF YOUR FELLOW PASSENGERS!

REST NOW! IN A FEW DAYS, WHEN YOU'RE STRONGER, I'LL SHOW YOU THE RESULTS OF SOME OF MY EXPERIMENTS!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

TODAY I'M GOING TO  
SHOW YOU WHAT I'VE DONE  
IN THE FIELD OF SURGERY!

I'VE BEEN  
EAGERLY AWAIT-  
ING THIS,  
DOCTOR!



HERE IS ONE OF MY EARLIEST  
EXPERIMENTS IN GRAFTING  
PARTS OF BODIES TOGETHER...

GREAT  
HEAVENS!



IT'S A DOG WITH  
**THREE HEADS!**..  
AND THE TAIL OF A  
**SNAKE!** YOU'VE  
SUCCEEDED IN GRAFT-  
ING PARTS OF  
ANIMALS ONTO  
CREATURES OF  
**DIFFERENT**  
**SPECIES!**

PRECISELY!



I SET MYSELF THE  
DIFFICULT TASK OF  
RECREATING MYTHICAL  
CREATURES LIKE  
**CERBERUS**, THE  
**HOUND OF HADES!**

(GASP!)

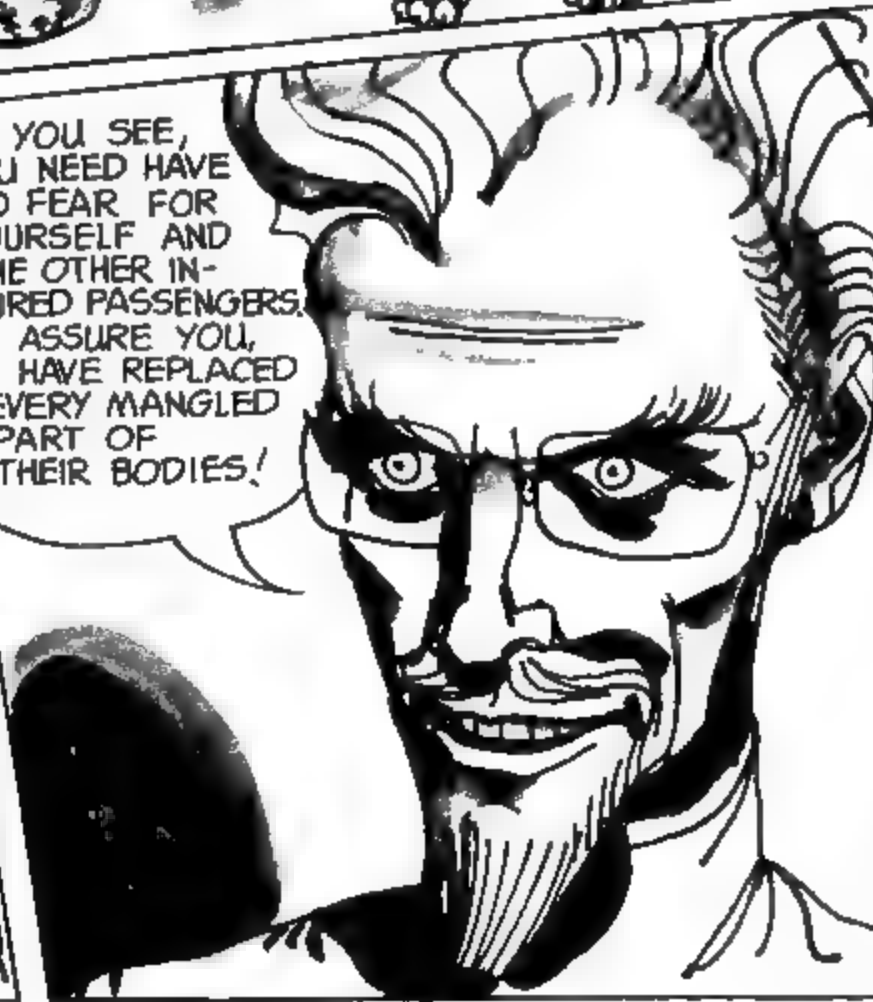


YEARS AGO, I GRAFTED  
THE BODY OF AN **EAGLE** TO THE  
HINDQUARTERS OF A **LION**  
CUB! AS I'D HOPED, THE EAGLE  
PART GREW WITH THE LION PART!

A  
**GRIFFIN!**



SO YOU SEE,  
YOU NEED HAVE  
NO FEAR FOR  
YOURSELF AND  
THE OTHER IN-  
JURED PASSENGERS.  
I ASSURE YOU,  
I HAVE REPLACED  
EVERY MANGLED  
PART OF  
THEIR BODIES!





SEVERAL WEEKS LATER...

TODAY WE REMOVE THE BANDAGES TO SEE IF THE SCALP TRANSPLANT HAS WORKED PROPERLY...

WONDERFUL!

WE'LL SOON KNOW IF...



HA, HA, HA, HA!  
PERFECT!



WHY? WHY WOULD YOU DO A HORRIBLE THING LIKE THIS TO ME?



I'LL TELL YOU TOMORROW! RIGHT NOW, I MUST GET TO MY OTHER PATIENTS, MY DEAR MEDUSA

THE FOLLOWING DAY, WARNER RETURNED TO KEEP HIS PROMISE.

FIRST I MUST SHOW YOU HOW WELL I'VE SUCCEEDED WITH YOUR FELLOW PASSENGERS. COME!



GRANT HARDING THE WESTERN MOVIE STAR! HE ALWAYS SEEMED PART OF THE HORSE HE RODE... NOW HE IS PART HORSE!

GOOD LORD! A CENTAUR!



MISS GRAVES, THE STEWARD-  
ESS! HER LEGS, ARMS AND  
BODY WERE BADLY MANGLED, BUT  
I REPLACED THEM WITH THOSE  
OF A **CONDOR**, SO SHE CAN **FLY**!

SHE'S  
A...  
**HARPY!**



THE GLAMOUROUS MISS SYLVIA PENN,  
OF HOLLYWOOD NOW HAS, AS THE LOWER  
PART OF HER BODY, WHAT WAS ONCE  
PART OF A HUGE **PYTHON**!

A...  
(CHOKES)  
**LAMIA!**



THE CO-PILOT'S HEAD WAS  
BADLY INJURED, SO I GAVE  
HIM A NEW ONE. HE STILL HAS  
HIS ORIGINAL BRAIN, HOWEVER.

YOU'VE MADE  
HIM A...  
**MINOTAUR!**



MISS ALICE PALMER, THE SWIMMING CHAMP!  
I SAW TO IT THAT HER SWIMMING CAREER  
WOULD CONTINUE... AFTER A FASHION!

A  
**MERMAID!**



YOUR COLLEAGUE, DR. MEISTER!  
I HAD TO REPLACE HIS LEGS...  
SO I ADDED THE HORNS, WHICH  
SEEMED A BEAUTIFUL TOUCH!

...TO MAKE  
HIM A COM-  
PLETE **SATYR!**



AND LAST, THE TEACHER,  
MISS DAVIS! I REPLACED  
HER MANGLED BODY WITH  
THAT OF A LION. TOO BAD  
IT'S TOO HEAVY FOR  
HER TO ACTUALLY **FLY**  
WITH THOSE CONDOR  
WINGS!

A... A  
**SPHINX!**





BUT **WHY** DID YOU DO IT? THERE WERE PLENTY OF **HUMAN** BODIES IN THAT WRECK FOR YOU TO USE! WITH YOUR TECHNIQUES, YOU COULD HAVE BECOME THE WORLD'S GREATEST SURGEON!

NOT QUITE! YOU SEE, **LEGALLY**, I AM **NOT A DOCTOR!**



"I WENT TO MEDICAL SCHOOL, ALL RIGHT, BUT A FEW WEEKS BEFORE GRADUATION, SOME OF MY PRIVATE EXPERIMENTS WERE DISCOVERED..."

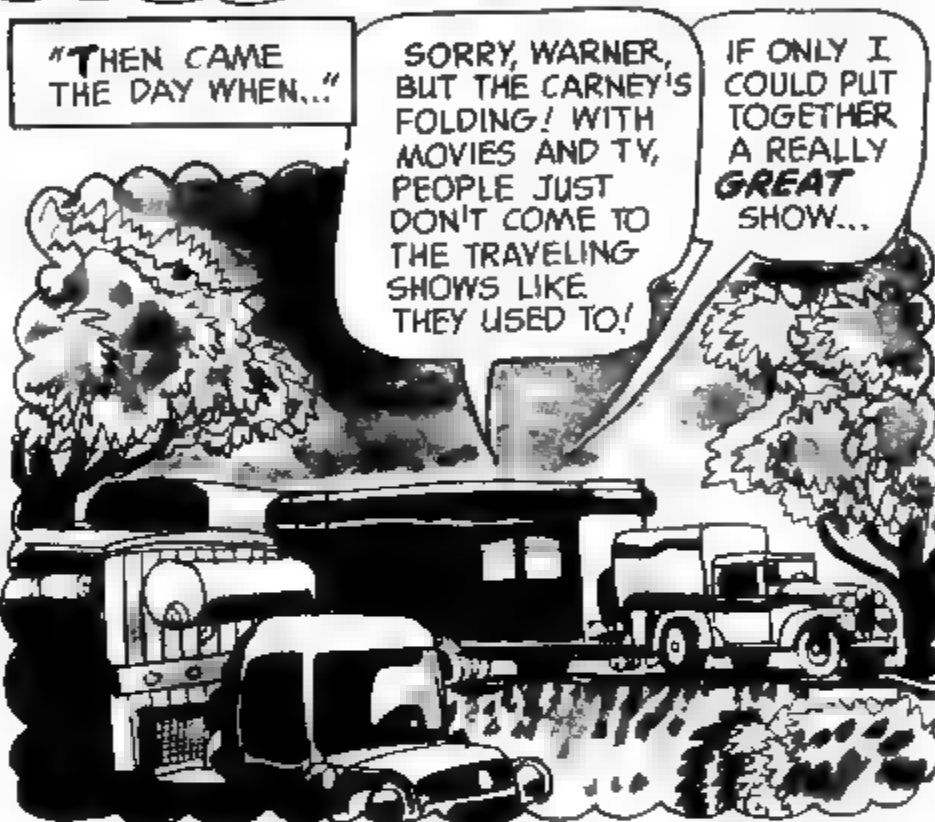
VIVISECTION IS NECESSARY TO MEDICAL EXPERIMENTATION! YES! BUT WANTON CRUELTY LIKE THIS IS IN TOLERABLE! YOU'RE **EXPELLED**, WARNER!

**NO!** NOT SO CLOSE TO GRADUATION!



"I DRIFTED FOR A WHILE. I WOUND UP AS A TALKER IN A CARNIVAL MIDWAY SHOW..."

THIS IS JUST A **SAMPLE** OF WHAT YOU'LL SEE ON THE INSIDE, FOLKS!! THE PRICE OF THE TICKET IS ONLY...



"THEN CAME THE DAY WHEN..."

SORRY, WARNER, BUT THE CARNEY'S FOLDING! WITH MOVIES AND TV, PEOPLE JUST DON'T COME TO THE TRAVELING SHOWS LIKE THEY USED TO!

IF ONLY I COULD PUT TOGETHER A REALLY **GREAT** SHOW...



LATER I INHERITED THIS ISLAND ESTATE AND A FORTUNE FROM AN ECCENTRIC UNCLE! I RESOLVED TO USE IT ALL TO RE-NEW MY EXPERIMENTS... TO CREATE THE GREATEST TENT SHOW OF ALL TIME!

**NO!**



NONE OF US WILL EVER CONSENT TO SUCH A LIFE... BEING PUT ON DISPLAY IN A CARNIVAL!

INDEED? **YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!** WHAT ELSE ARE YOU GOOD FOR NOW? DO **SNAKY-HAIRED GORGONS** PERFORM SURGERY?



THE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE... WE HIT THE ROAD NEXT MONTH!



THE SHOW BEGINS TOURING... WARNER HASN'T LOST HIS TOUCH AS A TALKER...

YES, INDEED, FOLKS! THERE ARE MARVELS HERE SUCH AS FEW HUMAN EYES HAVE EVER BEHELD!

MEDUSA, MY DEAR, REMOVE YOUR TURBAN!



HERE SHE IS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... **MEDUSA THE GORGON!** HER HAIR IS COMPOSED OF LIVING, WRITHING SERPENTS! AND THERE ARE EVEN **GREATER** ATTRACTIONS ON THE INSIDE!

HOLY MACKEREL!

ARE THOSE REAL SNAKES?

AW, IT'S A FAKE!

MAYBE... BUT I'M BUYIN' A TICKET!



AND INSIDE THE TENT, THEY FOUND **MORE** THAN THEIR MONEY'S WORTH!

... HALF WOMAN AND HALF SNAKE! WHILE MEDUSA HAS SERPENTINE HAIR, OUR **LAMIA** IS SERPENTINE AT THE **OTHER END!**

GEE, WHILLIKERS!

THEY CAN'T BE REAL, CAN THEY?

DUNNO--THEY SURE LOOK REAL!

SOMEDAY WE'LL ALL HAVE OUR REVENGE FOR WHAT HE'S DONE TO US!



THEN, ONE AFTERNOON, WHEN NO SHOW WAS BEING GIVEN...

MEDUSA, COME WITH ME! I'VE JUST MADE A FEW PURCHASES! YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP WITH AN OPERATION!

WHAT...? IS IT POSSIBLE?



A LION, A GOAT AND A PYTHON! TOGETHER THEY'LL BECOME A **CHIMERA!** WE'LL OPERATE TONIGHT!

GOOD! THAT WILL GIVE ME TIME TO MAKE PLANS OF MY OWN!



THAT EVENING, THE SURGERY WAS PERFORMED, GRAFTING THE HEAD OF THE LION AND THE TAIL OF THE SERPENT ON THE BODY OF THE GOAT!

THAT DOES IT! THE CHIMERA IS COMPLETE! IT'S TOO BAD WE CAN'T DO SOMETHING WITH THE LION'S **BODY**, AS WELL AS ITS **HEAD**!



WE AREN'T GOING TO WASTE THAT **BODY**! GRAB HIM, DAN!

WHAT IN...?



THANKS FOR TEACHING ME YOUR SECRETS, **MISTER WARNER**! I'LL USE THEM NOW!



LATER THAT NIGHT, A GRAVE WAS SECRETLY DUG...FOR FELIX WARNER'S **HEADLESS BODY**!



AND TWO WEEKS LATER, **TWO** NEW ATTRACTIONS WERE UNVEILED TO THE SHOW'S AUDIENCE... ONE WAS THE **CHIMERA**...

AND NOW FOR OUR OTHER FANTASTIC, NEW BEAST... NEVER BEFORE SHOWN PUBLICLY...

THE SECOND WAS FELIX WARNER, HIS HEAD NOW ON THE BODY OF A LION, DYED **BRIGHT RED**...THE TAIL STUPPED WITH **PORCUPINE QUILLS**...THE MOUTH GLEAMING WITH **THREE ROWS OF SHARKS' TEETH**!

HOLY MOSES!

I'LL BE DOGGONE

IT JUST DON'T SEEM POSSIBLE!

YEP, THOSE ARE THE FRANTIC FACTS, FEAR-FANS! SOME PEOPLE IN SHOW BUSINESS LOSE THEIR **HEADS**... BUT THAT'S ALL FELIX **KEPT**! HEH! HEH! BY THE WAY, IF THERE'S A CARNIVAL IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, BE CAREFUL...I HEAR THE SHOW IS LOOKING FOR **NEW ATTRACTIONS**!

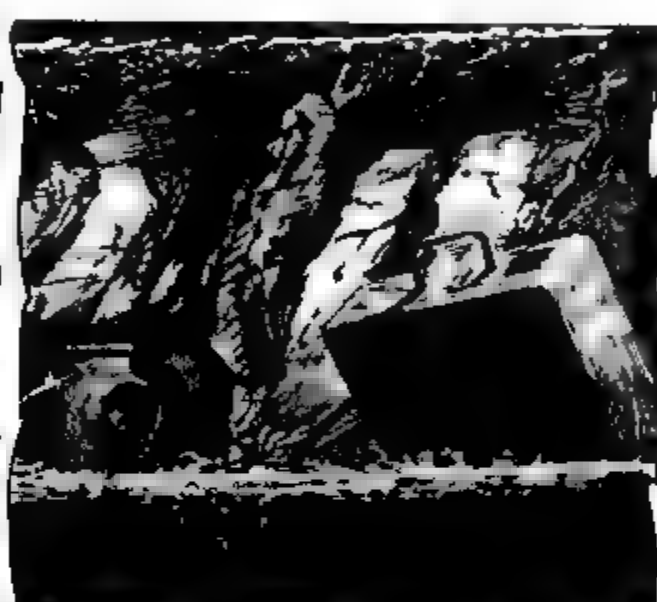
...THE **MANTICORE**!



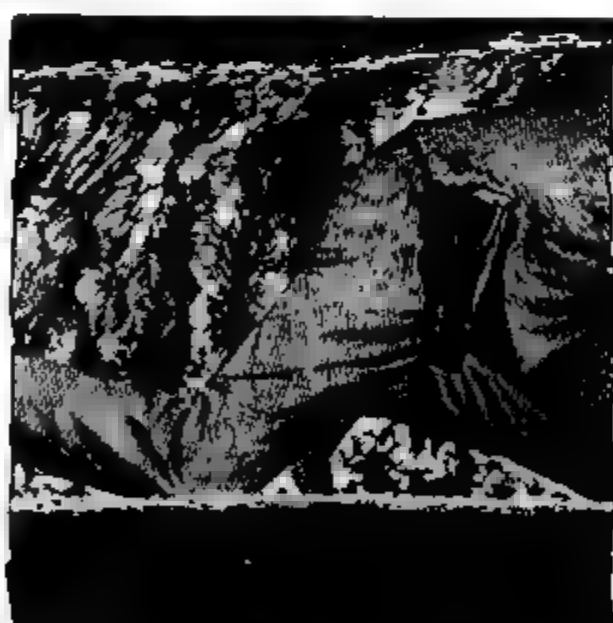
**PROLOGUE:** IT BEGINS FAR UNDERGROUND LIKE THE BURROW OF SOME LARGE FORGOTTEN ANIMAL AND TUNNELS UPWARD... BUT IN IT'S OWN WAY, THIS CARVED CHANNEL OF DAMP MUDDY EARTH IS A MUSEUM...



SCATTERED AND STREWN IN THE MOIST, CLINGING EARTH OF THE TUNNEL'S FLOOR ARE RELICS... OBJECTS OF THE PAST NO LONGER USEFUL EXCEPT AS CURIOSITIES, ABANDONED WHEN THEY CEASED TO FUNCTION...



SOUVENIRS OF ANOTHER AGE, ARTIFACTS OF ANOTHER TIME... RELICS IN A TUNNEL MUSEUM... RADIOS, TIN CANS, NEWSPAPERS, LANTERNS TOOLS, CONTAINERS, CANDLES AND ONE THING MORE... **A MAN!**





WANT TO GET THE SCOOP ON WHAT'S GOING ON, KIDDIES ? WELL, CAST YOUR GHOULISH GAZE INTO MY CRYSTAL BALL AND WE'LL TAKE A LOATHSOME LOOK INTO THE FEARFUL FUTURE... HOW FAR IN THE FUTURE ? WELL, NOT TOMORROW, OR THE NEXT DAY... LET'S JUST SAY IT'S...



# The Day After Doomsday!

OH, MY  
GOD!



ADKINS-

RICHARD CALDWELL HAD SURVIVED. HE HAD NO CONCEPT OF HOW LONG HE HAD BEEN UNDERGROUND. PERHAPS DAYS, PERHAPS MONTHS, PERHAPS YEARS... THINGS HAD STARTED TO GO WRONG IN THE SHELTER, GENERATORS HAD FAILED, EQUIPMENT HAD BROKEN DOWN... TIME HAD SLIPPED FROM HIS GRASP. NOTHING WENT AS PLANNED. HE HAD BEGUN TO DIG, AND ENDED BY CLAWING... BUT HE HAD SURVIVED!



T-THIS  
CAN'T BE  
**ALL!!**

THERE  
**HAS** TO BE  
SOMETHING  
ELSE..

HIS STUNNED EYES BLINKED AND  
STARED UNBELIEVINGLY ACROSS  
THE RUBBLE-STREWN  
BLEAKNESS...

MORE THAN  
THIS...

LIKE SOME PITIFUL  
FIGURE IN A NIGHT-  
MARE, RICHARD  
CALDWELL BEGAN  
TO WALK THROUGH  
THE SEEMINGLY  
ENDLESS REACH  
OF UTTER RUIN...

HE COULD NOT STOP  
TO REST... SCATTERED  
STONE AND MORTAR  
BEGAN TO GIVE AWAY  
TO BARREN BURNT  
EARTH... TWISTED  
GHOSTS OF TREES  
CROUCHED AGAINST  
THE WASTELAND...

NOT MUCH, BUT  
STUFF'S BEGINNING  
TO GROW UP HERE...  
LIVE!

**O-OTHERS!**

I SURVIVED...  
IF I COULD DO  
IT THERE MUST  
BE.

I FOUGHT... KILLED TO  
HANG ON TO THAT  
SHELTER... SACRIFICED  
EVERYTHING TO STAY  
ALIVE... FOR **THIS?**

BEYOND THE CITY... IT  
WON'T BE SO BAD OUT  
THERE... BOUND TO BE  
BETTER...



FOR SOME TIME, HE PEERED AT THE THING IN HIS HANDS, FEELING IT GROW MORE REPULSIVE AS HE SPECULATED HOW IT AND ITS MATES MIGHT HAVE COME TO BE THERE... A CHILL PASSED THROUGH HIM AS HE SUDDENLY BECAME AWARE OF A SHADOW THAT HAD FALLEN OVER HIM...



HIDEOUS FLESH, INHUMAN TO THE TOUCH, CLUTCHED AND GRABBED AT CALDWELL'S OWN, AS NIGHTMARE FEATURES PRESSED CLOSE, FORCING HIM BACK, STIFLING HIM, ABOUT TO DESTROY HIM...



HIS MOIST FINGERS FUMBLING AGAINST THE COLD STEEL AT HIS SIDE. THE WEAPON HAD NOT BEEN USED SINCE HIS EARLY DAYS IN THE SHELTER. EVEN AS CALDWELL SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER, HE COULD NOT BE SURE IT WOULD WORK...





CHEST HEAVING, BODY TREMBLING, CALDWELL ROSE ON SHAKY LEGS TO STARE DOWN IN DISBELIEF AT THE THING HE HAD JUST KILLED...

I-IT ALMOST GOT ME... JUST LIKE THESE OTHER POOR DEVILS IN THE GULLY! I MIGHT HAVE BEEN JUST ONE MORE SET OF BONES...

A SHUDDER PASSED THROUGH RICHARD CALDWELL, AND THE FULL IMPLICATION OF THE ATTACK SETTLED ON HIM LIKE AN ICY CHILL...

WHAT KIND OF WORLD HAVE I SAVED MYSELF FOR...? WHERE MONSTERS LIKE THAT PREY ON M-MEN AND...



FAINT, BUT CLEAR, THE SOUND STRUCK THROUGH THE SILENT WORLD AT CALDWELL, SENDING HIM PLUNGING TOWARD THE DIRECTION FROM WHICH IT CAME...

THE CRIES GREW LOUDER AS CALDWELL PUSHED NEARER, HINTS OF BOTH HOPE AND HORROR GROWING WITHIN HIM...

A WOMAN'S VOICE! I SWEAR IT'S A WOMAN!

I WON'T BE TAKEN BY SURPRISE THIS TIME... ANYONE DOES THE ATTACKING, IT'S GOING TO BE ME!



RAGE AND FURY SWELLED BEYOND FEAR  
INSIDE CALDWELL AND BURST FORTH,  
GALVANIZING HIM INTO ACTION...

NO, YOU #@%\*!!@!!  
NOOOOOO!!

BLAM!  
KA-BLAM!

IMAGES OF THE BONES HE HAD FOUND  
IN THE GULLY POUNDED IN CALDWELL'S  
MIND AS HE RACED FORWARD THIS WAS  
MORE THAN JUST SAVING THE GIRL, IT  
WAS SURVIVAL... MANKIND OR THESE  
MONTRIOUS FLESH-EATER!

BLAM!  
BLAM!

THE CREATURES WHIRLED IN PAIN AND SURPRISE  
AS OVER AND OVER AGAIN, CALDWELL FIRED, DEAF  
TO THEIR TERRIBLE SHRIEKS OF AGONY...

KA-BLAM!  
BLAM!  
BLAM!

...UNTIL, AT LAST, IT WAS  
OVER!

THE HAMMER ECHOED ON  
THE EMPTY CHAMBER, AND  
HE WADED IN SWINGING  
THE USELESS WEAPON  
LIKE A CLUB... DRIVEN BY A  
TERRIBLE FURY TO DESTROY  
THESE THINGS THAT HUNTED  
MEN DOWN LIKE SMALL  
GAME....

W WHO  
ARE YOU...?

EXHAUSTED, IN A HOARSE VOICE GASPING FOR BREATH, HE EXPLAINED, AS SOFT FRIGHTENED EYES STUDIED HIM...

...B-BUT... THESE THINGS... WHERE DID THEY... COME FROM...

YOU DON'T **KNOW** ABOUT THEM?

THEY'RE **MUTANTS**! RADIATION MADE THEM DIFFERENT THAN HUMANS... THEY'RE TRYING TO WIPE US OUT! BE- CAUSE OF THE FOOD PROBLEM....

EARLIER I SAW SOME BONES... FRESH..

THEY WERE FROM MY TRIBE... WE WERE SENT OUT TO SCOUT FOR FOOD. THE SITUATION'S DES- PERATE, BUT WE DIDN'T FIND ANY...

THEN THE MUTANT'S ATTACKED, EH? DON'T THINK ABOUT IT... JUST BE GLAD IT'S ALL OVER!

RICHARD CALDWELL MARVELED AT THE WAY THE GIRL HAD HELD UP TILL NOW, BUT HE HAD TO REMIND HIMSELF IT WAS A NEW WORLD, A HARDER ONE THAN HE HAD LEFT WHEN HE SEALED HIMSELF IN THE SHELTER...

HE FOLLOWED HER UNTIL NIGHTFALL... HE CAUGHT THE SMELL OF FIRE AND THE SOUND OF VOICES... HUMAN VOICES...

SO IT'S TRIBES NOW... BANDING TOGETHER... I GUESS, IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO SURVIVE NOW.

OTHERWISE, IT'S DOG EAT DOG, MR. CALDWELL. NOW, WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE MORE MUTANTS ARRIVE... THIS IS THEIR TERRITORY!

THERE! THE HOME OF MY TRIBE... THEY'LL BE HAPPY TO SEE YOU!

AMID ALL THE HORROR AND DES- OLATION I'VE SEEN TODAY, IT'S A WON- DERFUL SIGHT...



AS HE APPROACHED, CALDWELL WAS GREETED BY SMILING, EAGER FACES. HE SMILED TO HIMSELF... JUST AS HE'D SURVIVED THE WARS OF THE LAST WORLD, HE'D SURVIVED THE MUTANTS AND DANGERS OF THIS NEW ONE..



THEN, A SUDDEN DOUBT OVER-TOOK HIM..

BUT...IF THERE'S A FOOD PROBLEM, WON'T I BE JUST ONE MORE BURDEN FOR YOUR TRIBE?

NOT AT ALL, MR. CALDWELL...



...JUST THE OPPOSITE!

WOK!

STUNNED AND BLEEDING, CALDWELL FOUND HIMSELF UNABLE TO RISE. HAZILY, HE COULD HEAR HER FLAT ALMOST SNEERING WORDS...

USUALLY WE HAVE TO SETTLE FOR A MUTANT OR ONE OF OUR OWN AS A LAST MEASURE... LIKE THOSE FOOLS ON PATROL WITH ME! IT'S THE ONLY WAY LEFT, MR. CALDWELL!

OF COURSE THE MUTANTS KEEP TRYING TO STOP US, CHANGE US, BUT THERE AREN'T MANY OF THEM...



...AND THEY'RE STRICT VEGETARIANS!



WE MAY BE LEAVING RICHARD CALDWELL IN THE DARK BUT LET'S RUSH ON TO THROW SOME LIGHT ON MY NEXT LITTLE HORROR HAPPENING!



THE LEERING FACES LOOMED CLOSER AND CLOSER UNTIL DARKNESS COVERED RICHARD CALDWELL, A HIDEOUS DARKNESS THAT NOW HUNG HEAVILY ABOVE ALL SURVIVORS OF THE DAY AFTER DOOMSDAY!

GRAB YOUR RIFLES. RAB'D READERS. WE'RE GOING ON A **HAUNTING** EXPEDITION INTO TREACHEROUS **TERROR**-ITY TO SEEK OUT SOME REALLY B-G GAME! YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR NERVE AS WE PLUNGE INTO THE LAIR OF



# THE SWAMP GOD!

CROFT TH'S IS CRAZY, CHAS'NG AROUND AFTER SOME INDIAN LEGEND

YOU CAN'T BE SURE WHAT WE'LL FIND, DOUGLAS. NOBODY'S BEEN THIS DEEP INTO THE SWAMP BEFORE. RIGHT, JOHNNY?

SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE CAME THE LOW RUMBLE OF APPROACHING THUNDER; FLASHES OF HEAT & LIGHTNING BRIGHTENED THE NIGHT SKY... JOHN K. MA EASED UP ON THE POLE AND LET THE DUGOUT DRIFT IN A BRIEF STRETCH OF CLEAR WATER. ALREADY HE WAS HAVING REGRETS ABOUT THE EXPEDITION.

NO WHITE MAN, MR. CROFT. FOR CENTURIES MY PEOPLE HAVE MADE THIS AREA THEIR HOME... SOLATED AND PRIMITIVE!

BUT YOU'RE AN EDUCATED MAN, K. MA. YOU BELIEVE THIS "SWAMP GOD" STUFF?

A HERON SCREECHED AND WINGED SKY-  
WARD THROUGH THE DARKNESS THEN ONLY  
THE MEN'S VOICES BROKE THE LAYER OF  
SILENCE THAT HUNG OVER THE SWAMP  
THE SILENCE OF ANTICIPATION...  
PERHAPS OF THE AP-  
PROACHING STORM.

I BELIEVE ANY LEGEND  
HAS SOME ROOTS IN FACT!  
SOMETHING VERY REAL AND  
VERY TERRIBLE, STALKS  
IN THIS SWAMP!

AND JOHNNY'S  
FIXED IT SO  
YOU AND I GET  
FIRST CRACK  
AT IT DOUGLAS!



EAGLES TO  
ELEPHANTS,  
I'VE BAGGED  
THEM ALL,  
KIMA NOTHING  
IN HERE CAN  
BE THAT  
UNUSUAL!

UNUSUAL ENOUGH TO  
LEVEL ENTIRE VILLAGES!  
UNUSUAL ENOUGH THAT  
GENERATIONS OF  
MY TRIBE HAVE  
MADE SACRIFICES  
TO APPEASE IT!  
**HUMAN  
SACRIFICES!**



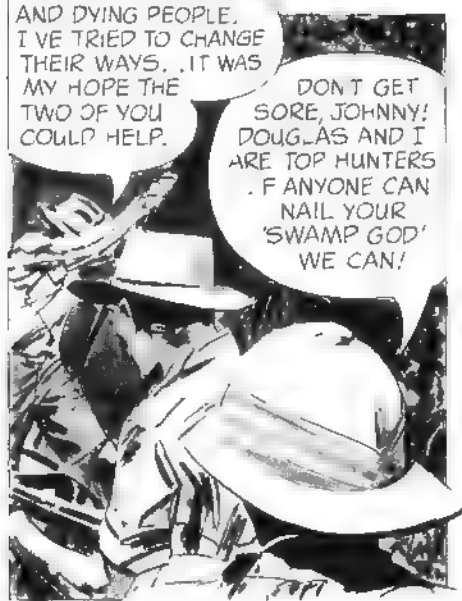
IF HUMAN SACRIFI--COME  
OFF IT KIMA! THIS DAY AND  
AGE? IF THERE'S MORE  
THAN AN OVERSIZED ALL-  
GATOR AROUND, I'LL EAT IT.

THIS SWAMP  
IS OLD.. DEEP..  
UNTOUCHED BY TIME!  
PAST AND PRESENT  
MEAN LITTLE  
HERE...



I'M OF A PRIMITIVE  
AND DYING PEOPLE.  
I'VE TRIED TO CHANGE  
THEIR WAYS.. IT WAS  
MY HOPE THE  
TWO OF YOU  
COULD HELP.

DON'T GET  
SORE, JOHNNY!  
DOUGLAS AND I  
ARE TOP HUNTERS  
IF ANYONE CAN  
NAIL YOUR  
'SWAMP GOD'  
WE CAN!



THUNDER RESOUNDED OVER-  
HEAD AND DROPS OF RAIN  
BEGAN PELTING THE THREE  
MEN IN THE DUGOUT...

WHAT'S UP?  
WHY ARE WE  
STOPPING?

WE CAN  
GO NO FURTHER  
...THIS IS THE  
PLACE OF  
SACRIFICE THE  
KILLING GROUND  
OF THE  
SWAMP GOD!







IT COMES FROM THERE BEYOND THE TREES!

LOOKS PEACEFUL NOW.. THIS RAIN WON'T MAKE WAITING EASY.

HATE TO HAVE COME AL THIS WAY FOR NOTHI-- WHAT'S THAT JOHNNY?



WHEN THE SWAMP GODS SACR FICE WAS PREPARED A BLAST FROM TH'S HORN WAS SAID TO SUMMON H.M FORTH..




MOMENTARILY ONLY THE SOUND OF THE RAIN WAS AUDIBLE IN THE SWAMP THEN THE INDIAN GUIDE'S LIPS TOUCHED THE OLD HORN, FILLING THE NIGHT WITH A LONG WAIL, ECHOING LIKE THE CRIES OF A WOUNDED ANIMAL, TORTURED AND UNEARTHLY!



DOUGLAS! T-THERE IN THE BOGS..



...S-SOMETHING'S STIRRING!



THE SWAMP'S STIFLING AIR  
WAS RENT BY A HUGE THUNDER-  
CLAP, QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY  
THE CRACKLING BRILLIANCE  
OF LIGHTNING ETCHING THE  
AREA IN AN EERIE GLOW.

TYRANNOSAURUS!  
KIMA WAS RIGHT...  
IT'S SURVIVED TIME!  
NURTURED ON  
H-HUMAN  
SACRIFICE...

OH MY GOD!

DOUGLAS! IT'S  
T-TREMENDOUS  
WE CAN T--

THESE RIFLES  
ARE HI-POWERED  
ENOUGH TO STOP  
ANYTHING! FIRE,  
YOU FOOL!  
FIRE!



THE GUNS!  
THEY'RE NOT  
FIRING! THEY'RE  
NOT FIRI---



GNYAHHHHHH!!!



OH LORD!  
IT'S D-DEVOURING  
CROFT!



CROFT'S HORRIBLE DYING SCREAMS  
MINGLED WITH THE SAVAGE SOUNDS  
OF THE RAMPAGING BEHEMOTH SENT  
DOUGLAS THRASHING THROUGH THE  
MURKY WATER. MUD AND SLIME BE-  
LOW LAUGHT AND GRABBED AT HIM  
REDUCING HIS MOTION TO THAT OF A  
MAN IN A DREAM.

KIMA! I THOUGHT  
THAT T-THING GOT  
YOU WITH THE  
DUGOUT!

NO MR DOUGLAS  
... I GOT AWAY  
AFTER SOUNDING  
THE HORN







GOOD THING TOO YOU MIGHT HAVE ENDED UP LIKE CROFT! BLASTED RIFLES... FINE WEAPONS FOR YEARS! HOW COULD THEY GO WRONG NOW?

NO BULLETS, MR DOUGLAS I REMOVED THEM WHEN I LOADED THE DUGOUT!



YOU DD WHAT? I DONT UNDERSTAND, WHY--KIMA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! NO!



AGAIN THE HIDEOUS SOUND OF THE SACRIFICIAL HORN ROSE THROUGH THE SWAMP

KIMA! WHY? THE THING'LL HEAR IT... GIVE ME A HAND! HELP ME OUT OF HERE! THAT MONSTER'S COMING... PLEASE!!

HOPELESSLY, DOUGLAS CLAWED AND SCRAPED AT THE MUD AND GRASS OF THE BANK ONLY TO FIND THE MIRE OF THE BOTTOM SLIPPING BENEATH HIS SCRAMBLING FEET. EVEN AS HOT REPTILIAN BREATH SPRAYED OVER HIM, ABOVE HIS OWN SCREAMS, HE COULD HEAR JOHN KIMA'S FADING WORDS.



..SINCE FROM NOW ON, I'M USING OUTSIDERS ONLY!!

IT'S AS I SAID, MR DOUGLAS. WITH YOUR HELP I'M CHANGING THE WAYS OF MY PEOPLE! THEY'LL CEASE DYING OUT FROM SACRIFICES...



HMMMMMMM... IT APPEARS DOUGLAS IS MORE SELF-SACRIFICING THAN I THOUGHT! NOW, BEFORE THE SWAMP GOD PUTS THE BITE ON HIM, WHY DON'T YOU NIBBLE AT MY NEXT GOODIE?





YOU *EERIE ENTHUSIASTS* ARE JUST IN TIME TO TAKE PART IN A LITTLE TERROR TRANSACTION I'M ARRANGING... AS USUAL IN MY DEMONIAL DEALS, THERE ARE A FEW STRINGS ATTACHED, AS JEWELLER *LESTER DARROW* FINDS OUT IN THIS LITTLE GEM I CALL...

# DEEP RUBY!

PERHAPS IT WAS A FEW YEARS AGO, PERHAPS A FEW MINUTES... I'M NO LONGER CERTAIN, AND IT NO LONGER MATTERS. I HAD WORKED QUITE LATE AT THE SHOP AND WAS STARTING HOME...

WHAT TH--

PSSST! MISTER...

THE MAN WAS A HORROR, SEEDY AND WRETCHED... A LEERING, LURCHING EXAMPLE OF HOW LOW HUMANITY COULD SINK. I RECOILED AT THE VERY SIGHT OF HIM APPROACHING ME...



GET BACK! I'LL HAVE THE POLICE ON YOU IF YOU TRY ANYTHING!

DON'T GET EXCITED! I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT'LL INTEREST YOU!

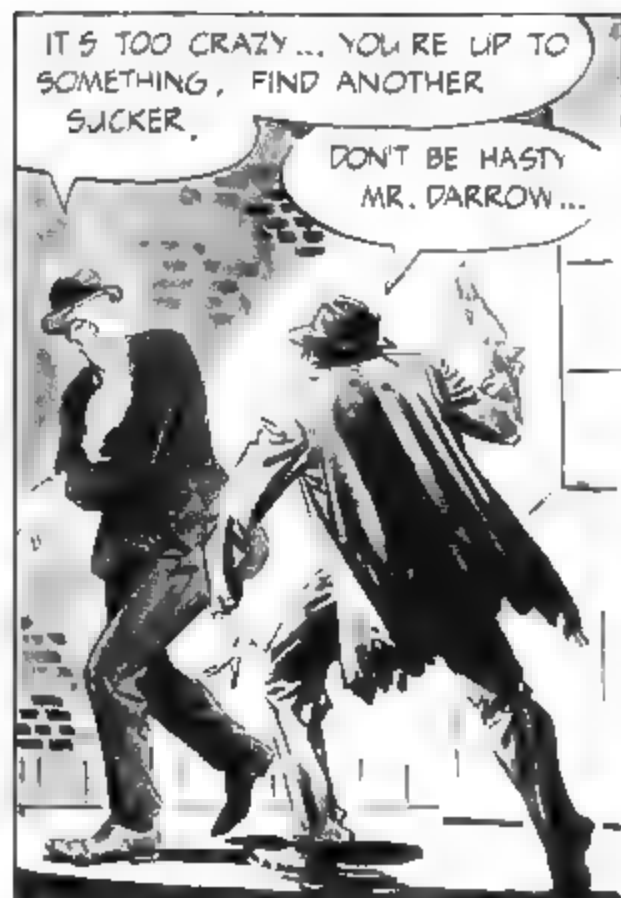


MY REVULSION SEEMED ALMOST TO DELIGHT HIM... HE PRESSED CLOSE, SNAGGLE-TOOTHED MOUTH BREAKING INTO A TERRIBLE SMILE. I TENSED AS THE DIRTY, SPLIT-NAILED FINGERS FUMBLING IN HIS POCKET...

NOTHING YOU HAVE COULD...

EVER SEE ANYTHING LIKE THIS?







EVEN AS I WAS UTTERING THE WORDS I FELT DRAWN MORE AND MORE TO THAT SWIRLING BLOOD RED VASTNESS THAT SPARKLED AND GLITTERED BEFORE ME ..

...MUST HAVE IT.  
MUST HAVE IT...  
MUST...

UNTIL THE TERRIBLE EXTENT OF MY FASCINATION BEGAN SLOWLY TO PENETRATE MY OVERWHELMED SENSES ....

THE RUBY...  
I'M INSIDE IT!  
INSIDE!

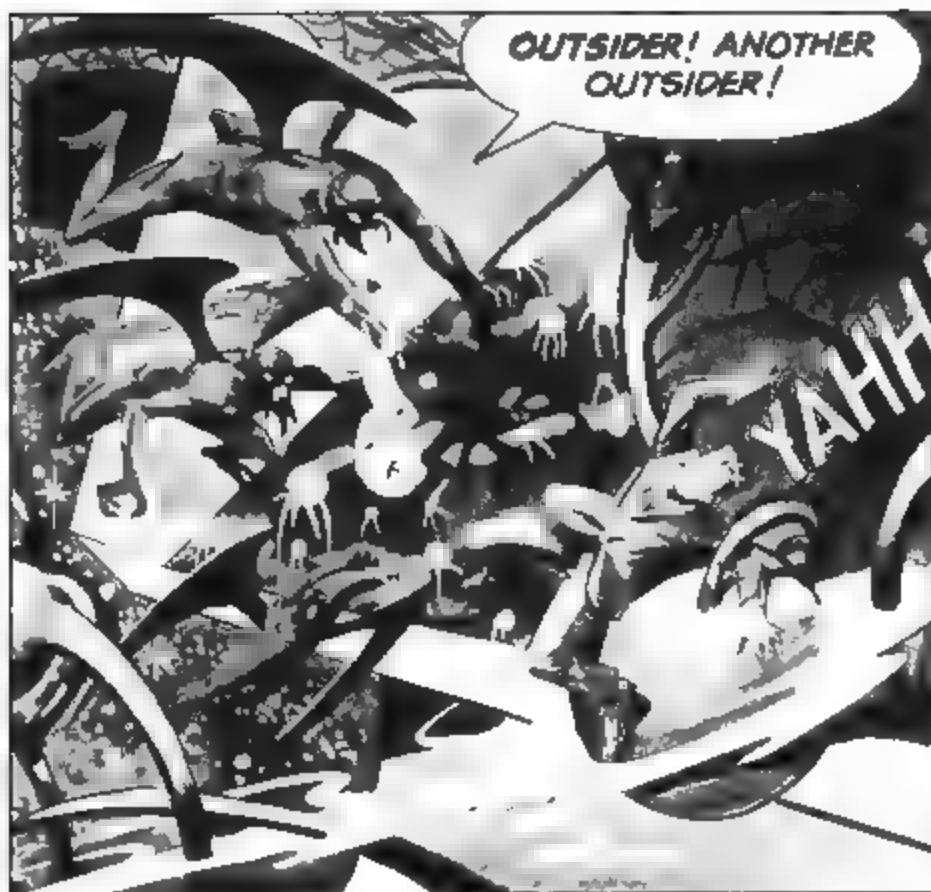
AMONG THE HANDLERS OF PRECIOUS STONES THERE ARE DARK RUMORS VAGUELY ALLUDED TO... STRANGE TALES OF DREAMING JEWELS SORCERERS' STONES! PRICELESS GEMS CURSED AND HAUNTED... AND IN ONE MADDENING INSTANT, **I KNEW THEM TO BE TRUE !**

THIS CAN'T BE  
HAPPENING... IT CAN'T  
BE!

YET IT WAS LIKE SOME WANDERER OF THE COSMOS I PLUNGED DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THIS MICROCOSMIC UNIVERSE ... AT THE MERCY OF A POWER BEYOND MY COMPREHENSION ....

AND AS I SWEEP ON CAME THE GROWING UNCOMFORTABLE SENSATION THAT I WAS NOT ALONE IN THIS NIGHTMARE DIMENSION...





OUTSIDER! ANOTHER  
OUTSIDER!

YAHH



SCREECHING HORROR SWOOPED TOWARD ME ON DEMON  
WINGS... MY WITS FAILED ME BUT SOMEHOW MY RE-  
FLEXES DID NOT!



NOTHING COULD HAVE BEEN SHORTER LIVED THAN THIS  
BRIEF VICTORY FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THIS DEEP RUBY  
WORLD WERE NOT LIMITED IN NUMBER

OUTSIDER!  
OUTSIDER!

NO! GOOD GOD  
NO!



...NOR STRENGTH AND AGILITY .. WHY ARE YOU DOING

WE HAVE HIM!  
HE'S OURS!

THIS? I DON'T MEAN  
ANY HARM! LEAVE ME  
ALONE .. **PLEASE!**



HELPLESSLY IN THE  
GRIP OF THE SUPERNATURAL, I WAS PULLED  
THROUGH THE EVER-  
SHIFTING ATMOSPHERE  
TOWARD AN INCREAS-  
INGLY THUNDEROUS  
GRINDING SOUND..

T-THAT THING AHEAD...  
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING  
ME? WHAT IS  
THAT?

IT IS THE SOURCE...  
THE CENTER OF THE RUBY  
UNIVERSE





NOW, AS I CROUCH  
HERE IN THE SHADOWS  
STARING OUT INTO THE  
VERY REAL EVERYDAY  
WORLD, I REALIZE  
FULLY THE PRICE  
REQUIRED OF ME TO  
ESCAPE THAT DEEP  
RUBY HELL.



... AND I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I MUST DO AND KEEP DOING UNTIL I FIND ONE WHO IS WILLING TO  
PAY THE SAME PRICE... SOMEONE... **ANYONE!**

PSSST!  
MISTER...



DON'T GET EXCITED! I'VE  
GOT SOMETHING THAT'LL  
INTEREST **YOU!**

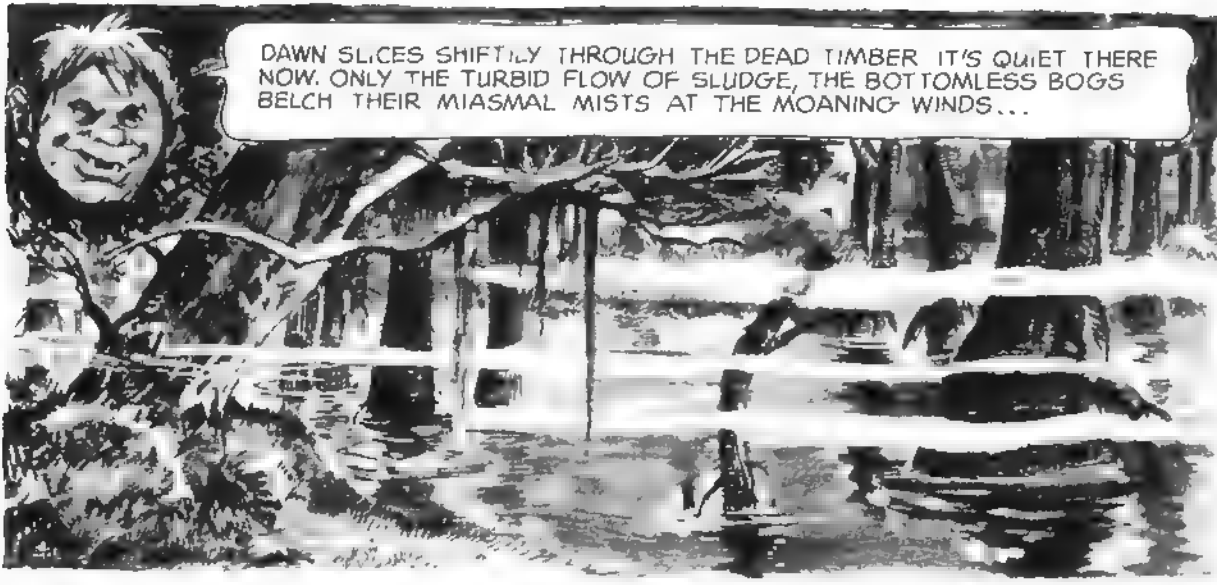


EVER SEE ANYTHING  
LIKE **THIS?**




WELL, WRITHING READERS, HOW'S YOUR SALES  
RESISTANCE? DON'T EXAMINE THE MERCHANDISE TOO  
CLOSELY OR YOU MAY FINISH THE ISSUE FROM INSIDE  
THE RUBY! BETTER PLAY IT SAFE AND RUN ON TO  
THE NEXT OF MY NAUSEATING NOVELETES!






DAWN SLICES SHIFTILY THROUGH THE DEAD TIMBER. IT'S QUIET THERE NOW. ONLY THE TURBID FLOW OF SLUDGE, THE BOTTOMLESS BOGS BELCH THEIR MIASMAL MISTS AT THE MOANING WINDS...



BUT FAR AWAY, THE THIN CRACKLING OF ROTTED BRANCHES PRELUDES A VISIT FROM MORE OF THE FULL-FLESHED, FLUSH BLOODED INVADERS FROM THE WORLD WITHOUT...

A VISIT FROM **MAN**, IN SEARCH OF THE UNKNOWN...

THIS HERE'S FOOLISHNESS.  
JEST FOOLISHNESS.



THAT'S PROBABLY IT!  
ONE O' THEM **FLYIN' SQUIRRELS** CAME A'SWOOPIN' NEAR YA!

I SWEAR, BRUTHER -- THEY WAS **MONSTERS!** ENORMOUS UGLY THINGS!



IT'S ALL TRUE, JAKE... RIGHT UP THAR I SEEN 'EM... AND.. AND..

...THAR THEY BE, JAKE!

# THE SHLUGGER!







DO IT AGIN, JAKE!  
KILL THAT OL'  
THING!



IT'S STILL A'  
COMIN'. BLAST  
'IM! I KNOW I  
HIT THAT--  
OUCH!



JAKE! HUSTLE  
UP! THAR MAY  
BE MORE OF 'EM!

CAIN'T HUSTLE FAR  
ON *THIS* LEG,  
WOMAN... IT'S  
TWISTED BAD!



GIT PAPPY AND  
THE BOYS!! GIT BACK  
HERE FAST, Y'HEAR?!

I'M FLYIN', JAKE!  
I TOLE YOU I  
WASN'T LYIN'  
'BOUT THOSE  
SLIMY SLUGS!



IT'LL BE DARK 'FORE  
I GIT HOME AT THIS  
RATE! JAKE *KNOWS*  
WE WON'T BE ABLE  
TO GIT BACK THROUGH  
THIS SWAMP 'TIL  
DAYLIGHT!



THAT'S WHAT I GIT  
FER LOSIN' MY HEAD  
LIKE A SLACK-JAWED  
YOUNG 'UN!...

EH? ... I SWAN!  
I-IT'S A' STIRRIN'  
AGIN'!



MAY TEAR THIS LEG UP SOME, BUT  
I'D BEST HIGHTAIL IT **ANYHOW!**



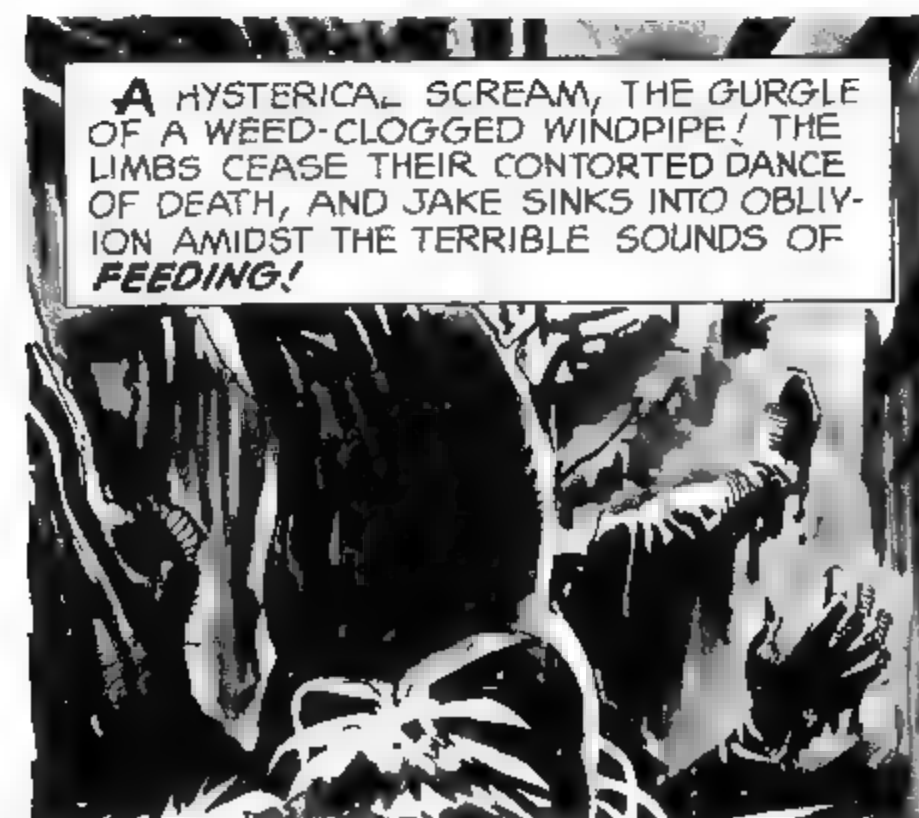
THE HALF-LAME MAN STAGGERS THROUGH  
THE ROOT STREWN, MUDDY TURF, BUT...

OOOOF!  
NO GOOD!!



WHAT?!? NO!

NOOOOOOOOO!!



**A** HYSTERICAL SCREAM, THE GURGLE  
OF A WEED-CLOGGED WINDPIPE! THE  
LIMBS CEASE THEIR CONTORTED DANCE  
OF DEATH, AND JAKE SINKS INTO OBLIV-  
ION AMIDST THE TERRIBLE SOUNDS OF  
**FEEDING!**



**S**OON EVEN THE MOST SUBTLE SOUNDS  
ARE SWALLOWED BY NIGHT. A DAMP  
CHILL PERVADES THE SILENT SWAMP.  
EVEN THE FROGS AND CRICKETS HAVE  
FLED FROM THE NAMELESS BLOOD-  
SUCKERS WHO'VE CLAIMED THIS PRIMEVAL  
PLACE...

BUT A THIRST STRONGER THAN THE OUT-REACHING EMBRACE OF DEATH BRINGS JAKE PAINFULLY BACK TO HIS SENSES...



INSTINCTIVELY, THE FILTHY MUD-COVERED FIGURE HALF-CRAWLS, HALF-ROLLS THROUGH THE MUD AND WEED...

WATER... WATER...



SLIDING, WORMING HIS WAY THROUGH OOZE AND SLIME, WALLOWING HIS WAY THROUGH THE TURBID FOLDS OF THE MOIST MARSH, TOWARD THAT WHICH HIS ENTIRE BEING SCREAMS FOR...

...SO THIRSTY... WEAK... MUST HAVE... WATER...



UNTIL AT LAST, CAKED AND COATED WITH THE CLINGING MUCK THROUGH WHICH HE HAS MOVED, JAKE TUMBLES INTO THE MOSS-COATED, STAGNANT GRIP OF THE THICK BLACK SWAMP WATER...



...AND SETTLES, A LIMP AND FORMLESS PHANTOM, HIS BODY NUMB FOR THE NEED OF ITS LOST LIFEBLOOD, CRAVING AND CARING ONLY FOR THE SURROUNDING MOISTURE...



NOW, THERE HE SITS, HIS PORES OCCASIONALLY INHALING JUST ENOUGH OXYGEN TO KEEP THE ORGANISM ALIVE... AS IF HE WERE NOTHING MORE THAN A ...**SLUG!**







HOURS LYING IMMOBILE, SLOWLY ABSORBING MOISTURE, INCHING BACK FROM NEAR-DEATH, HAVE MADE JAKE'S MIND, LUCID AGAIN, BUT...

OH, GAWD! THEY GONNA KILL ME! JEST LIKE I DID THEM OTHER PORE SOULS! SO WEAK... GOTTA PUT ALL MY STRENGTH INTO ONE YELL... ONE WARNING...



HIS SLIME-CAKED FACE CRACKS AND STRAINS INTO AN OPEN MOUTHED CRY, ONLY TO BE BETRAYED BY PARCHED, WEAKENED VOCAL CHORDS WHICH CAN ONLY SEND FORTH A RASPING ROAR AS INHUMAN AS HIS APPEARANCE...



THAT GOT 'IM, PAPPY!

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO JAKE? THEM OL' THINGS COULDN'T O' GOT HIM! THEY JEST COULDN'T... JAKE! OH, JAKE!



THEY EDGE CLOSE TO THE FALLEN HULK, TO THE CREATURE OF MUD AND SLIME, CLOSE ENOUGH TO SEE BEYOND THE CAKED, CRACKING SURFACE OF ITS FACE...

JAKE! CAN YOU HEAR ME, BRUTHER MINE?!

PA!... OH, GAWD... PA!



AND IN THE DISTANCE, BEYOND THE MUFFLED SOBS OF GRIEF FROM THE FATHER WHO BENDS OVER THE SPRAWLED ALIEN SHAPE...

HELLO, LITTLE FELLERS... HAVE Y'ALL SEEN MAH BIG BRUTHER HEREABOUTS?





SEEMS OUR FURRY LITTLE FRIENDS ARE BENT ON TURNING THAT SWAMP INTO A REAL **SLUGFEST** AND YOU'RE PROBABLY BENT ON TURNING THIS PAGE INTO THE NEXT **YELL YARN!**



EMMETT HAZELTINE'S FACE GREW DARKER...

NO ONE TOLD YOU? MY WIFE'S BEEN IN AN ASYLUM SINCE JUST AFTER GIVING BIRTH... INCURABLY INSANE! WHAT THE BOY THINKS DOESN'T MATTER!

I'M SORRY... I-I DIDN'T KNOW... BUT IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THE CHILD AND I GET ALONG, OR ELSE...

THAT'S BETWEEN YOU AND HIM! MY WORK HERE IN THE LIBRARY DEMANDS ALL MY TIME... IT'S ESSENTIAL! HANDLE THE BOY AS YOU WILL!

THIS TIME OF DAY, HE'S USUALLY IN THE GARDEN... BY THE POND, LATHROP WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY!

HAZELTINE FACED HIS BOOK SHELVES SHUTTING RACHEL OUT WITHOUT CHANCE OF REPLY. THE BUTLER APPEARED AND LEAD HER TO THE BACK OF THE HOUSE, OUTSIDE INTO THE FADING SUNLIGHT.

MASTER DONALD! MASTER DONALD, I'VE BROUGHT MISS MEREDITH, YOUR NEW GOVERNESS...

WHAT'S BEHIND YOUR BACK? WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?

NOTHING, LATHROP...

RACHEL FELT HERSELF AT ONCE IMPRESSED AND REPELLED BY THE BOY. NEAT AND HANDSOME, YET SOMEHOW DISTANT AND REMOVED, HIS DELICATE FEATURED FACE AN IMMOBILE MASK. AS THEY APPROACHED, DONALD BROUGHT HIS HAND OUT FROM BEHIND HIS BACK..

...NOTHING BUT THIS!

DEAR LORD! IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN KILLED BY SOME KIND OF... A-ANIMAL!

READY FOR A CHANGE OF PACE, FELLOW-FIENDSTERS?  
LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T ARRANGE FOR YOU TO FACE  
THE BROODING MENACE OF...



# THE CHANGELING!

Gene Colan

IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON, BUT DARKNESS  
HAD ALREADY OVERTAKEN MUCH OF THE  
AGING MANSION'S INTERIOR, ADDING TO  
THE SINISTER EFFECT OF ITS RAMBLING  
ARCHITECTURE. FOR THE FIRST TIME  
SINCE LEAVING BOSTON, RACHEL MEREDITH  
WAS HAVING REGRETS...

THE BUTLER USHERED  
RACHEL INTO THE LIBRARY SHADOWS  
CAST BY THE FLICKERING FLAMES OF  
THE FIREPLACE. ADDED ONE MORE  
MACABRE TOUCH TO THE OLD BUILDING'S  
GLOOM. COLD EYES PEERED BALEFULLY  
AT HER FROM UNDER THE DARK BROW  
OF THE MAN FACING HER...

THIS WAY, MISS.  
MR. HAZELTINE'S  
BEEN WAITING...

ALL THOSE  
STARES FROM  
THE TOWNSPEOPLE  
WHEN I SAID I  
WAS COMING HERE  
...SMALL WONDER  
I'M NERVOUS!

I'M EMMETT HAZELTINE,  
MISS MEREDITH. WELCOME TO MY  
HOUSE. MY LAWYER GAVE YOU A  
GLOWING RECOMMENDATION...  
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE A FINE GOVERN-  
ESS FOR THE BOY.

T-THANK YOU,  
MR. HAZELTINE...  
I HOPE YOUR  
WIFE AND  
SON THINK  
SO TOO. I  
CERTAINLY WILL  
TR---



FLUSHED WITH ANGER, THE BUTLER SPRANG FORWARD SENDING THE MUTILATED CARCASS FLYING FROM THE CHILD'S GRIP...

**YOU LITTLE MONSTER!**

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR TRICKS! TIME YOU LEARNED A LESSON...

**NO, MR. LATHROP!**

AS LONG AS I'M GOVERNESS, YOU'RE NEVER TO LAY A HAND TO THIS BOY! ANY CHILD'S NATURALLY CURIOUS ABOUT DEATH... THAT'S WHY HE HAD IT!



VERY WELL, MISS, WE'LL SEE. SEE HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOU HEAR ABOUT THE **FIRST** GOVERNESS!

RACHEL TOOK THE BOY TO HIS ROOM, THEN BURST INTO THE LIBRARY OUTRAGED AND ANNOYED, REPEATING THE INCIDENT TO THE BROODING MASTER OF HAZELTINE HOUSE...

IT'S NOTHING TO ME, MISS MEREDITH! WHERE THE BOY'S CONCERNED LATHROP WILL OBEY YOUR WISHES! NOW IF YOU'RE

DONE DISTURBING MY RESEARCH...

JUST ONE MORE THING, MR.

HAZELTINE. ANOTHER WOMAN HAD MY JOB. WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?



HAZELTINE'S LARGE, STRONG HANDS BROUGHT HIS BOOK SHUT WITH A LOUD SNAP. RACHEL COULD NOT BE SURE IF IT WERE THE MAN'S WORDS OR THE BOOK'S TITLE THAT SENT A SHIVER THROUGH HER...

**SHE WAS KILLED, MISS MEREDITH!**

BY SOME MANNER OF WILD ANIMAL THE AUTHORITIES SEEMED TO THINK.

ANIMAL THE AUTHORITIES SEEMED TO THINK.



THE CHILL OF FORBODING STAYED WITH HER THROUGH THE EVENING, UNTIL BEDTIME...

I'M NOT SORRY ABOUT THE CAT, IT SCRATCHED ME ONCE, I'M GLAD IT WAS KILLED, BUT HAVING SOMEONE TAKE MY PART WAS NICE... NO ONE EVER DID IT BEFORE!

DON'T WORRY, DONALD. I'M HERE TO HELP WHENEVER I CAN... NOW YOU SHOULD BE GOING TO SLEEP...





RACHEL PAUSED AT THE WINDOW. THE GARDEN BELOW WAS A DARK MASS OF SHRUBBERY AND SHADOWS! THE FINE HAIR ON THE BACK OF HER NECK SUDDENLY TINGLED. FOR AN INSTANT, ONE OF THE SHADOWS SEEMED TO MOVE, THEN MELT INTO THE DARKNESS..

I - I MUST BE TIRED... THE STRAIN OF THE FIRST DAY...



THE NIGHT'S STRANGENESS FADED INTO MORNING AND THE FIRST OF HER TUTORING WITH DONALD...

WEARILY SHE RETURNED TO HER OWN ROOM. RACHEL COULD NOT BE SURE, BUT AS HER HEAVY EYELIDS CLOSED THERE SEEMED TO BE A FAINT SHUFFLING SOUND IN THE HALL, PAUSING, THEN MOVING ALONG PAST, DOWN TOWARD THE ROOMS OF THE OTHER SERVANTS..

DONALD! DONALD! HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO LEARN HISTORY WHILE STARING OUT THAT WINDOW?

THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON... SOMETHING IN THE GARDEN!



IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN! IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN!

GOD HELP US! IT'S LATHROP! LIKE THE HOUND OF THE HELL HAD RUN 'IM TO EARTH!



RACHEL STARED, TRANSFIXED WITH HORROR, THEN SLOWLY NOTICED A CHILLING SOUND... A SOFT CHILDISH SNICKER...

**DONALD!**  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP IT! A MAN'S DIED OUT THERE...

ONLY LATHROP, NASTY OLD LATHROP! I HATED HIM AND HE HATED ME... EVERYONE HATES ME...

THAT'S A **TERRIBLE** THING TO SAY... IT'S NOT TRUE! WHAT ABOUT ME? WHAT ABOUT YOUR FATHER?

HE'S **WORSE** THAN LATHROP! WORSE THAN ANYONE... YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T MISS MEREDITH... THE ONLY ONE!

RACHEL WANTED TO CONTRADICT THE TERRIBLE ACCUSATION OF THE SMALL SOLEMN FACE, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY, DONALD'S WORDS WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HER UNTIL EVENING WHEN SHE COULD STAND IT NO MORE...

MR. HAZELTINE, I'VE GOT TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT DONALD... **NOW!**

THERE'S NO NEED, AFTER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO LATHROP, EVERY OTHER SERVANT'S QUIT... I SEE NO REASON FOR YOU TO STAY ON!

I HAD HOPED TO HAVE A SOLUTION BEFORE NOW, BEFORE ANOTHER DEATH... BUT IT'S NOT EASY... SO MANY BOOKS, SO LITTLE TIME...

NO REASON? WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON? YOUR OWN SON!

**BOOKS?!**  
YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS LOOKING FOR ANSWERS AMID THIS JUMBLE OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY? FOR THAT YOU NEGLECT YOUR OWN SON?

**STOP CALLING HIM MY SON!**  
I KNOW THAT LITTLE HORROR FOR WHAT HE IS!



A CHANGELING, MISS MEREDITH! DO YOU KNOW OF THEM? SPAWN OF THE DEVIL'S CREATURES, LEFT IN THE CRADLE IN EXCHANGE FOR HUMAN INFANTS... MY CHILD WAS STOLEN, AND THIS... LEFT IN HIS PLACE!

WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK MY WIFE WENT MAD?!

THE PURE FURY OF THE EMMETT HAZELTINE'S WORDS HIT RACHEL LIKE Mallet STROKES. SHE BACKED SLOWLY FROM THE ROOM...

BUT SOME-DAY I'LL FIND IT... THE SPELL, THE CURSE, THE MEANS TO DESTROY HIM... TO SEND HIM BACK TO THE PIT FROM WHICH HE CAME!

DEAR LORD! HE'S INSANE... COMPLETELY INSANE!



SHE FLED THE LIBRARY, RACING UP FLIGHTS OF THE DARK CREAKING STAIRS...

DONALD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP?

NOISE WOKE ME... I HEARD VOICES... SHOUTING!



DONALD, DEAR, LISTEN TO ME... IT ISN'T SAFE HERE ANY LONGER! YOUR FATHER'S NOT WELL... I'VE GOT TO GET YOU AWAY...

YES... I THINK I'M READY TO LEAVE NOW!

NO! DEAR GOD, NO! THIS TIME IT'S NOT NERVES...

DONALD... LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM...

THE MOON-LIGHT OUTSIDE THE OPEN LANDING WINDOW SOMEHOW PULLED RACHEL'S EYES. A DEATHLY QUIET HUNG OVER THE MANSION AND DARKENED GARDEN... THEN RACHEL HEARD THE SOUND...





THIS WAS NO SLEEP-FOGGED DELUSION NOW SHE COULD HEAR THE DOOR FROM THE GARDEN, THEN AGAIN THE SHUFFLING... SLITHERING... NOW INSIDE!

D-DONALD, I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE OUT HERE... LET'S...

COME ON, MISS MEREDITH, THIS WAY...

COME ON, WE WANT TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON... COME ON, MISS MEREDITH!

FROM THE YAWNING BLACK DEPTHS OF THE STAIRWAY, MORE SOUNDS DRIFTED UP... WOOD SPLINTERING AND CRACKING AS THE LIBRARY DOOR GAVE WAY!

DONALD! DON'T GO DOWN THERE! GET BACK! DONALD!

THE GLOW OF THE KEROSENE LAMP CREPT SURELY DOWN THE WINDING FLIGHTS AND DISAPPEARED IN THE VICINITY OF THE LIBRARY. SECONDS LATER, THE DARKNESS WAS SPLIT BY SHREKING HORROR!

DONALD! OH, MY GOD... DONALD!



HALF-RUNNING, HALF FALLING, RACHEL DESCENDED THE STAIRS ONLY TO FREEZE IN MADDENING TERROR AT THE MACABRE TABLEAU BEFORE HER, AS SOUNDS AND ODORS OF UNEARTHLY CARNAGE STUNNED HER REMAINING SENSES.



THEN, AS THOUGH ONLY A NIGHTMARE INSTEAD OF THIS PHANTASMAGORIC REALITY, SHE RACED FORWARD FOR THE BOY, HOPING STILL TO SAVE HIM.

DONALD! LISTEN TO ME! COME BACK! COME BA---

THE LAMP! YOU'VE DROPPED THE LAMP!



HE SHRUGGED FREE SENDING RACHEL REELING BACKWARD AS THE LAMP HIT THE CARPETING AND SCATTERED BOOKS... ABOVE THE CRACKLING FLAMES AND HAZETINE'S SCREAMS, SHE COULD HEAR THE GROWING GIGGLE OF THE BOY...



THE LIBRARY BECAME AN INFERNO WHICH WOULD SOON SPREAD TO THE ENTIRE HOUSE, AND THE DANCING SHADOWS OF ITS FLAMES ALL BUT DROVE RACHEL MAD AS SHE SANK INTO OBLIVION DONALD'S LAUGHTER GREW TO A WORD SHOUTED OVER AND OVER... THE NAME OF THE LOATHSOME THING CLAWING AND DESTROYING HAZELTINE...



MEN FROM THE VILLAGE FOUND HER THE NEXT MORNING SPRAWLED ON THE LAWN OF WHAT ONCE HAD BEEN HAZETINE HOUSE... INSIDE, THEY FOUND THE CHARRED REMAINS OF EMMETT HAZELTINE, NOTHING MORE!


SHE'S GONNA BE OKAY... LITTLE DELIRIOUS NOW, BUT SHE'LL BE OKAY...

...THAT'S WHAT HE CALLED IT. THAT THING. HE CALLED IT... **MOTHER!**



SO DONALD HAD A PRETTY HOT TIME AT HIS FAMILY REUNION... LIKE ALL MOTHERS, HIS TENDED TO BE OVERPROTECTIVE... AS MR. HAZELTINE FOUND OUT! AND YOU'LL FIND OUT THERE'S MORE MONSTROUS MAYHEM AWAITING YOU WHEN YOU READ MY NEXT **SCARY STORY!**





IN THE MOOD FOR VISITING, MONSTERS?  
THEN LET'S JOIN A YOUNG DOCTOR WHO'S  
ABOUT TO MAKE A CALL ON A HOME FULL  
OF HORRORS...YOU'LL WANT TO BE THERE  
AS HE CONFRONTS THOSE WORTHY  
RESIDENTS OF THE...

# HOUSE OF FIENDS!

THE HOUSE PERCHED ON THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF,  
LOOMING UP THROUGH FOG AND MIST LIKE SOME MONSTROUS  
BIRD OF PREY READY TO SWOOP DOWN ON ITS KILL... IT HAD BEEN  
DAYLIGHT WHEN THE COACH LEFT PRENTICE AT THE CROSSROADS, BUT NIGHT  
HAD SHORTLY FOLLOWED AS HE MADE HIS WAY UP THE PATH. THE SIGHT OF THE  
HOUSE'S GLOOMY FACADE MADE HIM DUCK DEEPER INTO THE FOLDS OF HIS CAPE. IN  
THE DISTANCE, MUFFLED BY THE MISTS, CAME THE LONELY SOUND OF WAVES BREAKING  
AGAINST ROCKS, AND PRENTICE HUNGHEED FORWARD EVEN MORE, THE AUTUMN WIND AT  
HIS BACK SUDDENLY FEELING MORE CHILL THAN EVER...



HE RAPPED AT THE DOOR FOR SOMETIME BEFORE, WITH A MOURNFUL CREAK OF RUSTING HINGES, IT OPENED A CRACK AND A GLITTERING EYE VIEWED HIM SUSPICIOUSLY FROM THE GLOOM WITHIN...



WHO BE YE?  
WHAT'S YOUR  
BUSINESS  
HERE?

I-IT WAS MY  
UNDERSTANDING  
YOU SENT FOR  
A DOCTOR...

YE AIN'T  
THE  
DOCTOR!  
DOCTOR'S  
AN OLDER  
MAN! FAT...



THAT'S DR. ALDRICH.  
SINCE HIS  
DISAPPEARANCE  
... I'VE BEEN  
ASSIGNED TO  
TAKE OVER HIS  
CASES.. I'M DR.  
PRENTICE PLEASE,  
I'VE COME ALL  
THIS WAY, WON'T  
YOU...

THERE WAS THE SOUND OF FOOT STEPS BEHIND THE UNYIELDING GLARE OF THE GROTESQUE LITTLE FACE. THE DOOR SWUNG OPEN WIDE...



GROMLEY! WHERE ARE  
YOUR MANNERS! LET  
THE DOCTOR IN...

FORGIVE MY SERVANT,  
SIR! HE'S QUITE LOYAL,  
BUT TENDS TO BE OVER  
ZEALOUS... I'M HUGO  
LUPUS! WELCOME TO  
MY HOME!

WITHIN THE SHADOWED LUXURY OF THE ENTRANCE HALL, A WOMAN OF BEAUTIFUL BUT ICY COUNTERNANCE WAS PRESENTED TO PRENTICE. LUPUS'S WIFE, CAMILLA...

YOU ALL SEEM IN EXCELLENT HEALTH  
... I HAD NO OPPORTUNITY TO FAMILIAR-  
IZE MYSELF WITH DR. ALDRICH'S RECORDS  
... IS THERE SOMEONE ELSE?

MY NIECE..  
RACHEL!  
SHE...  
SHE'S NOT  
LIKE THE REST  
OF US!



THE GIRL IS *INSANE*, DR. PRENTICE!  
IT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION FOR  
THE THINGS SHE SAYS, DOES...  
**MADNESS!**

IT MAY NOT  
BE SO  
TERRIBLE AS  
YOU THINK,  
MR. LUPUS...  
THERE HAVE  
BEEN AD-  
VANCES, NEW  
THEORIES...



GOOD HEAVENS!  
THAT SOUND.. IT'S..

MY NIECE...  
**RACHEL!**



WE KEEP RACHEL  
IN THE TOWER  
ROOM IT'S BEST  
THAT WAY. SHE  
CAN'T INTERFERE  
WITH OUR REGULAR  
ROUTINE...

SOUNDS HARSH,  
MR. LUPUS.  
THESE CASES  
REQUIRE  
SYMPATHY,  
UNDERSTANDING...

HUGO LUPUS TURNED TO PRENTICE AS HE UNLOCKED  
A MASSIVE DOOR, HIS FACE CLOUDED AND GLOOMY,  
A HINT OF ANGER IN THE DARK EYES PEERING OUT  
FROM UNDER HIS HEAVY BROW...

THE GIRL IS *MAD*, DOCTOR! SHE CANNOT ADJUST TO OUR  
WAY OF LIFE... WE'VE LOST PATIENCE! SUCH *NSANITY* IS A  
*DISEASE!* AN EVIL DISEASE OF THE SPIRIT... WE  
INTEND TO HAVE HER *COMMITTED*, PUT WHERE  
SHE CAN'T BOTHER US!

BUT... SEE FOR YOURSELF!

G-GOOD  
LORD!

THIS IS BARBARIC! SMALL WONDER  
IF THE GIRL SUFFERS ANY DISORDER!  
**GET OUT! LEAVE US ALONE!**  
PERHAPS THEN AN *ACCURATE*  
EXAMINATION CAN BE CONDUCTED!

YOU'RE YOUNG,  
DR. PRENTICE  
... RASH! I'LL  
HUMOR YOU,  
BUT REMEMBER...  
SHE'S *INSANE!* DON'T  
BELIEVE A WORD  
SHE SAYS.

LUPUS SET DOWN THE LIGHT AND CLOSED THE  
HEAVY DOOR BEHIND HIM. ONLY THEN DID PRENTICE  
TURN TO THE CHAINED FIGURE HUDDLED PITIFULLY  
AGAINST THE WALL...

RACHEL?... DON'T BE  
AFRAID! I WON'T HURT  
YOU... I'M YOUR FRIEND...  
I WANT TO HELP...

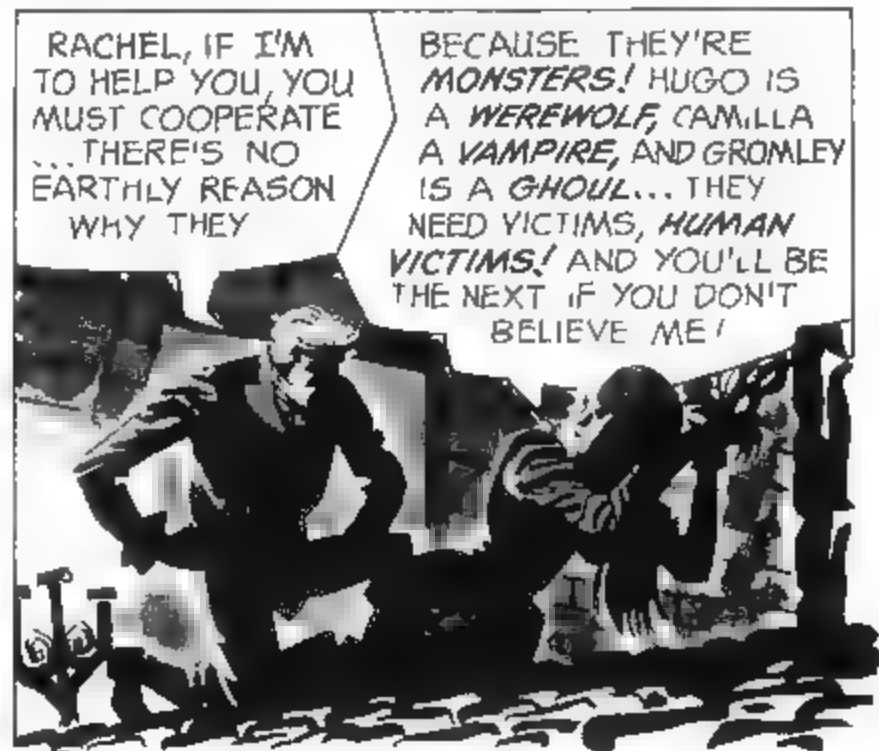
YOU'D BETTER GET  
OUT OF HERE...  
THEY'RE GOING TO  
KILL YOU...

PRENTICE TOOK THE TREMBLING FACE IN HIS HANDS, BRUSHING AWAY STRANDS OF GOLDEN HAIR. THE EYES OFTEN SPOKE FIRST OF MADNESS, BUT THESE FRIGHTENED ORBS WERE NOT GLAZED OR DULL... THEY QUESTIONED, BUT INTENTLY, AS THOUGH REACHING INTO HIS VERY SOUL...



KILL ME? WHY SHOULD THEY DO THAT, RACHEL? THEY'RE THE ONES WHO SENT FOR ME...

THEY'RE GOING TO KILL YOU... JUST LIKE THEY DID DR. ALDRICH! I'M NOT CRAZY, IT'S TRUE! I'M USED AS BAIT TO LURE YOU HERE!



RACHEL, IF I'M TO HELP YOU, YOU MUST COOPERATE... THERE'S NO EARTHLY REASON WHY THEY

BECAUSE THEY'RE **MONSTERS!** HUGO IS A **WEREWOLF**, CAMILLA A **VAMPIRE**, AND GROMLEY IS A **GHOUL**... THEY NEED VICTIMS, **HUMAN VICTIMS!** AND YOU'LL BE THE NEXT IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME!



BUT THAT'S INCREDIBLE, IT'S SHEER...

**MADNESS**, DOCTOR? THAT'S WHAT THEY COUNT ON, THAT YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME UNTIL TOO LATE... I'M NOT CRAZY, **I'M NOT!** SINCE I'M A RELATIVE THEY TRY NOT TO HARM ME, JUST KEEP ME CHAINED... **HELPLESS!** SO I CAN BE USED...

PRENTICE'S THROAT FELT PARCHED, DRY, HER CHAINED HANDS CLASPED HIS HOTLY, HER MOIST EYES PLEADINGLY RIVETED WITH DEEPEST ATTENTION ON HIS OWN. HE FOUND HIMSELF ALMOST DESPERATELY WANTING TO BELIEVE THE SOBBING WORDS FROM THOSE DELICATE PALE LIPS...

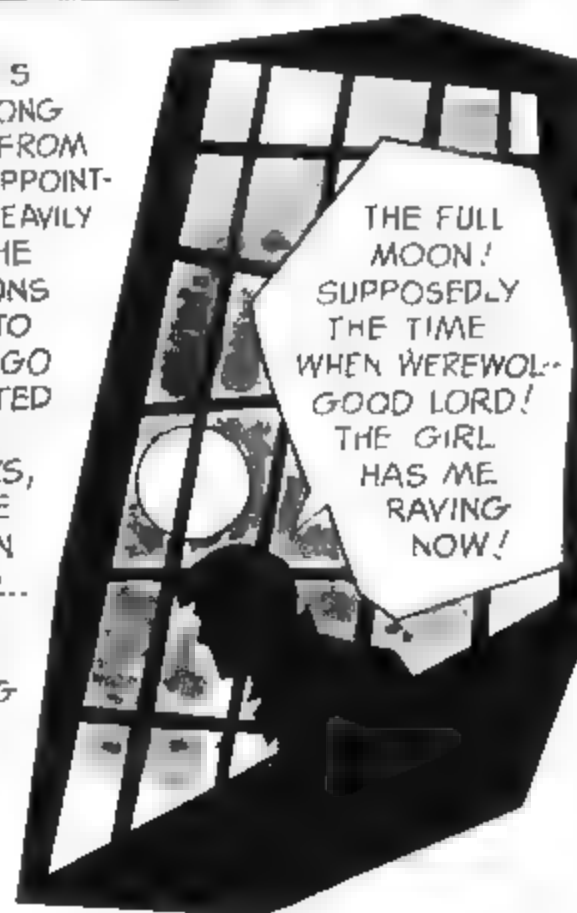
**PLEASE!** YOU KNOW I'M TELLING THE TRUTH... GET ME OUT OF HERE! SET ME FREE! PLEASE, DOCTOR, PLEASE! I'M NOT MAD, **I'M NOT!**



LISTEN, RACHEL, I... I BELIEVE IT'S WRONG THAT YOU'RE CHAINED THIS WAY.. I'LL GET THE KEY FROM HUGO, BUT.. BUT BEYOND THAT.. I CAN'T REALLY...

YOU'LL BELIEVE ME, I **KNOW** YOU'LL BELIEVE ME!

AS HE MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE LONG WINDING STAIRS FROM THE TOWER, DISAPPOINTMENT WEIGHED HEAVILY ON PRENTICE. THE WILD ACCUSATIONS ONLY SEEMED TO PROVE WHAT HUGO LUPLS HAD INSISTED THE SINCERITY, THE DEEP LOOKS, WERE ONLY THE CUNNING OF AN UNSTABLE MIND... THEN, FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE NOTICED THE FOG HAD LIFTED TO REVEAL A BRIGHT AUTUMN MOON...



THE FULL MOON! SUPPOSEDLY THE TIME WHEN WEREWOLFS... GOOD LORD! THE GIRL HAS ME RAVING NOW!



PRENTICE LOCATED LUPUS IN THE STUDY. HE STARTED TO SPEAK, BEFORE ENTERING, THEN SUDDENLY HELD BACK... SOMETHING ABOUT THE MAN'S ATTITUDE, HIS POSTURE...

STRANGE. HE SEEMS COMPLETELY ABSORBED, AS THOUGH HE COULDN'T TEAR HIMSELF AWAY

THE MOON LIGHT! IT'S CHANGING HIM! TRANSFORMING HIM...

THE GIRL WAS RIGHT.

HUGO LUPUS IS A... **A WERE-WOLF!**

THE HARD, METALLIC TASTE OF FEAR ROSE IN PRENTICE'S MOUTH. HIS KNEES GREW WEAK AND EVERY NERVE TINGLED. HE KNEW HE HAD TO GET AWAY, LEAVE THE STUDY BEFORE THAT RAGING BESTIAL THING INSIDE LAUNCHED INTO ITS TERRIBLE HUNT..

THANK GOD, I WAS WARNED! HAVE TO FIND SOMEWAY OF COMBATING THAT T-THING! SOME WEAPON OF **SILVER**... THE KITCHEN! THERE OUGHT TO BE SOMETHING AMONG THE SILVERWARE.

MOVING AS FAST AS HE COULD WITHOUT CREATING TELL-TALE NOISE TO BETRAY HIM, PRENTICE CREPT THROUGH THE DARK, DESERTED CORRIDORS, UNTIL HIS SEARCH BROUGHT HIM TO THE KITCHEN..

GROMLEY! BUT WHAT'S HE DOING WHAT'S HE GOT ON THAT TABLE...?

PRENTICE PEERED MORE CLOSELY, STUDYING THE TWISTED FORM OF THE LITTLE MAN HUNCHED OVER THE GREAT TABLE, SOMEHOW REMINDING HIM OF A TIME WHEN HE HAD SURPRISED A CAT BENT OVER A MOUSE IT HAD KILLED...



**OH, LORD!**  
T-THAT'S A BODY!  
AND, THE CLOTHES  
... THE TYPE  
DR ALDRICH  
WORE! THAT  
SOUND ..  
GROMLEY  
MUST BE  
MUST BE ..

A WAVE OF REVULSION SWEEPED THROUGH HIS BODY LIKE A FIRE OUT OF CONTROL, KINDLING PRENTICE INTO RAGE AND ACTION!



THE DOCTOR BECAME LIKE A MAD DOG, CLINGING TENACIOUSLY TO THE SQUEALING GROMLEY AS BOTH WENT ROLLING AND SPRAWLING, SMASHING ALL ABOUT THEM. HIS FINGERS, STRONG AS STEEL FROM HOURS IN SURGERY, GRIPPING AND SQUEEZING THE NECK IN THEIR GRASP. GROMLEY CLAWED AND KICKED WITH THE VICIOUSNESS OF A TRAPPED ANIMAL, LIMBS FLOPPING FIRST THIS WAY THEN THAT. HIS MOUTH WAS OPEN, GASPING OUT TERRIBLE CURSES, REVEALING ROWS OF RAZOR SHARP LITTLE TEETH .. HIS FACE FIERY RED, TURNING PURPLE



THEN, AFTER LONG, STRAINING MOMENTS, IT ENDED...

NOW, GOT TO FIND KNIFE, SOMETHING OF SILVER... TO HANDLE HUGO ..

SO DOCTOR! YOU'VE FOUND WHAT WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO HIDE. YOU KNOW WHY WE WANTED RACHEL COMMITTED...



PRENTICE SLOWLY BACKED AWAY AS CAMILLA ADVANCED, HER RED-RIMMED EYES ALIVE WITH EVIL... HIS FOOT STRUCK SOMETHING, THE WRECKAGE OF THE CHAIR HE AND GROMLEY HAD SMASHED. HIS DESPERATE FINGERS DIVED FOR THE DEBRIS AS CAMILLA'S GLISTENING FANGS DREW CLOSE



AND, WITH EVERY MUSCLE IN HIS BODY TAUT AND STRAINING, HIS PRACTICED EYE AIMED AT THE PRECISE SPOT IN THE CHEST, PRENTICE THRUST!

HIS MIND WAS REELING NOW HE FELT HOT AND FEVERISH... FATIGUE AND STRAIN SAT ON HIS BODY LIKE GREAT WEIGHTS DRAGGING AND SLOWING EVERY MOVEMENT. FIGHTING EACH STEP OF THE WAY, PRENTICE RAMPAGED THROUGH THE KITCHEN UNTIL HE FOUND WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR...



CAN'T STOP NOW...NOT WHILE HUGO'S STILL LOOSE... MUST KEEP GOING.

HEART POUNDING, PRENTICE STALKED THROUGH THE DIM ROOMS AND CORRIDORS, STEELING HIMSELF THAT EACH NEW TURN MIGHT BRING HIM FACE TO FACE WITH THE WEREBEAST THAT WAS HUGO LUPUS. BUT THE HOUSE WAS DESERTED, SILENT, UNTIL...



THAT'S RACHEL!

WITH A LAST BURST OF ENERGY AND EFFORT, PRENTICE HURLED HIMSELF AT THE TOWER ROOM DOOR. IT WAS OPEN...





THERE WAS NO TIME TO SHOUT OR LEAP, CHARGE OR CRY. IT WAS DOUBTFUL HE HAD STRENGTH TO DO IT HAD THERE BEEN. IN ONE COMPLETE, DESPERATE MOTION, PRENTICE HURLED THE KNIFE, PRAYING THE SILVER SHAFT.



WOULD STRIKE HOME!!



WEAK, FAINTLY ILL WITH EXHAUST ON, PRENTICE FOUND THE KEYS ON HUGO'S BODY AND WITH TREMBLING FINGERS FREED THE GIRL, NOW AGLOW WITH EXCITEMENT ..

THERE, RACHEL...IT'S OVER... THEY'VE ALL BEEN DESTROYED EACH FIENDISH ONE...

FREE! I KNEW YOU'D BELIEVE ME. THE MOMENT I LOOKED IN YOUR EYES! INNOCENT, TRUSTING. I KNEW YOU'D BELIEVE

WHAT. WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY? I DON'T...

CHAINING MY HANDS MADE ME HELPLESS, BUT GIVEN THE PROPER SUBJECT, I CAN STILL SUGGEST THINGS .. THE OTHERS WERE TOO STRONG BUT I CONVINCED YOU. MADE YOU SEE THEM AS MONSTERS..



RACHEL'S FREED HANDS SEEMED DANCE THROUGH THE AIR, MAKING STRANGE MYSTICAL PASSES AND GESTURES. THE ENTIRE HOUSE GREW DARK, WINDS ROSE BREAKING WINDOWS, SWEEPING THROUGH WITH HOWLING FURY. THROUGH IT ALL RACHEL LAUGHED, LAUGHED LIKE ONE *INSANE*...INSANE WITH POWER, THE POWER OF EVIL!

NOW I'M UNSHACKLED, *FREE!* FREE TO CONJURE WITH MY FULL POWERS, FREE TO RUN RAMPANT AS BEFORE THEY CONFINED ME, FREE TO DESTROY FOOLS LIKE YOU AND DR. ALDRICH..

---FREE TO LIVE MY LIFE AS A *WITCH!*

OOPS! LOOKS LIKE THE DOC MADE THE WRONG DIAGNOSES.. BUT IF YOU LIKE SEEING *CREEPY* MONSTERS, *EERIE'S* THE PLACE TO FIND 'EM!





LIKE SOME DEMONIAL DECORATION FOR THAT BLANK WALL IN YOUR PADDED CELL? THEN PUT THOSE SHARP CLAWS TO GOOD USE AND CLIP OUT THIS LATEST WEIRD WORK FROM...


## EERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY!



## THE MUMMY

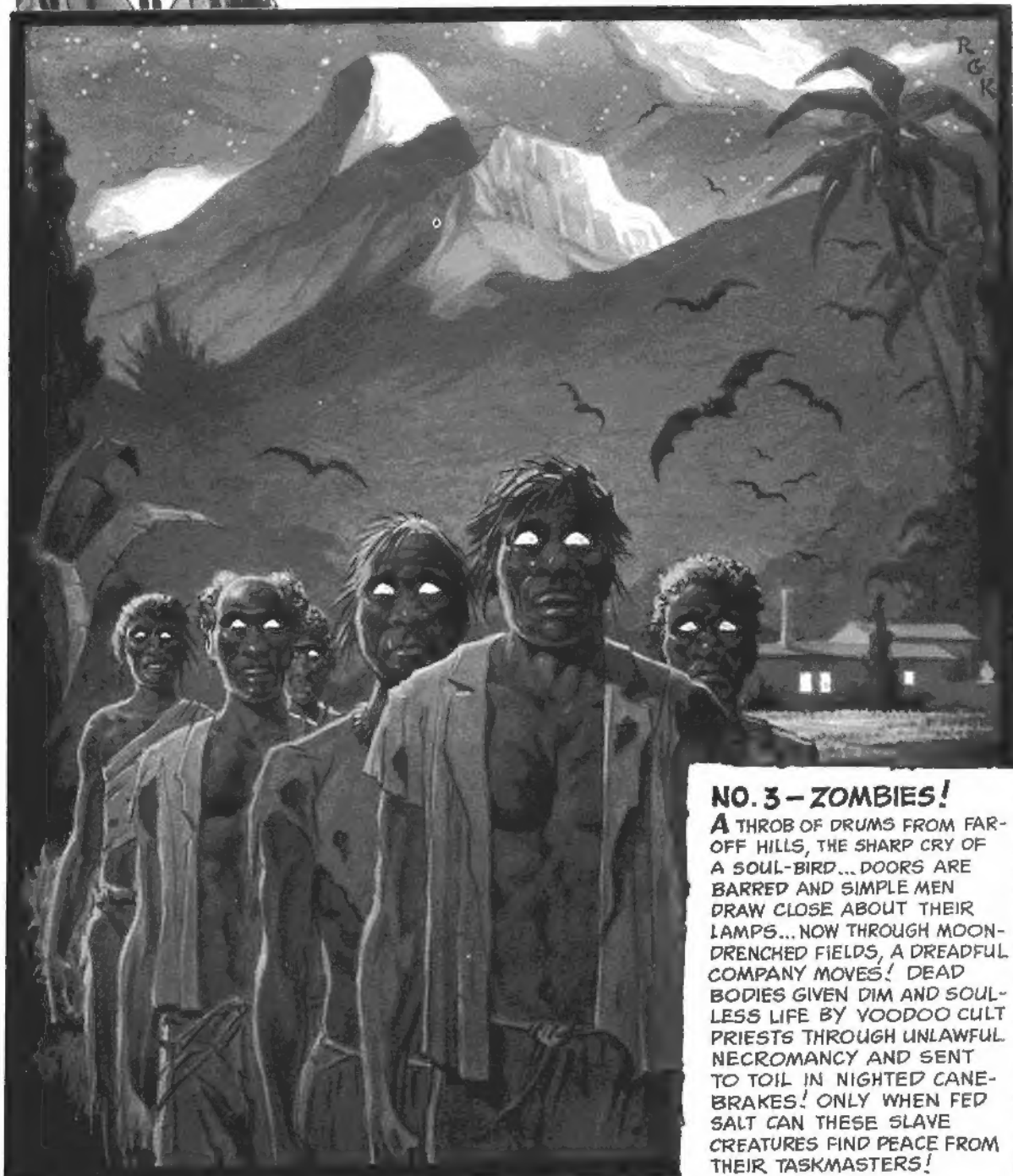
BELIEVING IN LITERAL RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, ANCIENT EGYPTIANS CAREFULLY MUMMIFIED AND ENTOMBED THEIR REMAINS! THE SOUL WOULD DEPART FOR JUDGEMENT BY OSIRIS, BUT THE LIFE-SPIRIT, OR KA, WOULD STALK THE TOMB, AND SHOULD IT BE VIOLATED, RE-ENTER THE MUMMIFIED CORPSE, GALVANATING IT TO TERRIBLE VENGEANCE! HIGH PRIESTS OF TOTH, GOD OF MAGIC, COULD ALSO CALL FORTH THE KA-ANIMATED DEAD TO SERVE THEIR EVIL ENDS, TO BE STOPPED ONLY BY COUNTER-SPILLS FROM THE BOOK OF THE DEAD!

Art by Wallace Wood and Don Adkins



HERE'S THE LATEST IN OUR SHRIEKING SERIES OF  
**MONSTROUS MASTERPIECES...** DUST OFF A SPOT ON  
THE WALL OF YOUR TOMB AND GET READY TO HANG THIS  
ENTRY IN...

## **EERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY!**



### **NO. 3 - ZOMBIES!**

A THROB OF DRUMS FROM FAR-OFF HILLS, THE SHARP CRY OF A SOUL-BIRD... DOORS ARE BARRED AND SIMPLE MEN DRAW CLOSE ABOUT THEIR LAMPS... NOW THROUGH MOON-DRENCHED FIELDS, A DREADFUL COMPANY MOVES! DEAD BODIES GIVEN DIM AND SOUL-LESS LIFE BY VODOO CULT PRIESTS THROUGH UNLAWFUL NECROMANCY AND SENT TO TOIL IN NIGHTED CANE-BRAKES! ONLY WHEN FED SALT CAN THESE SLAVE CREATURES FIND PEACE FROM THEIR TASKMASTERS!

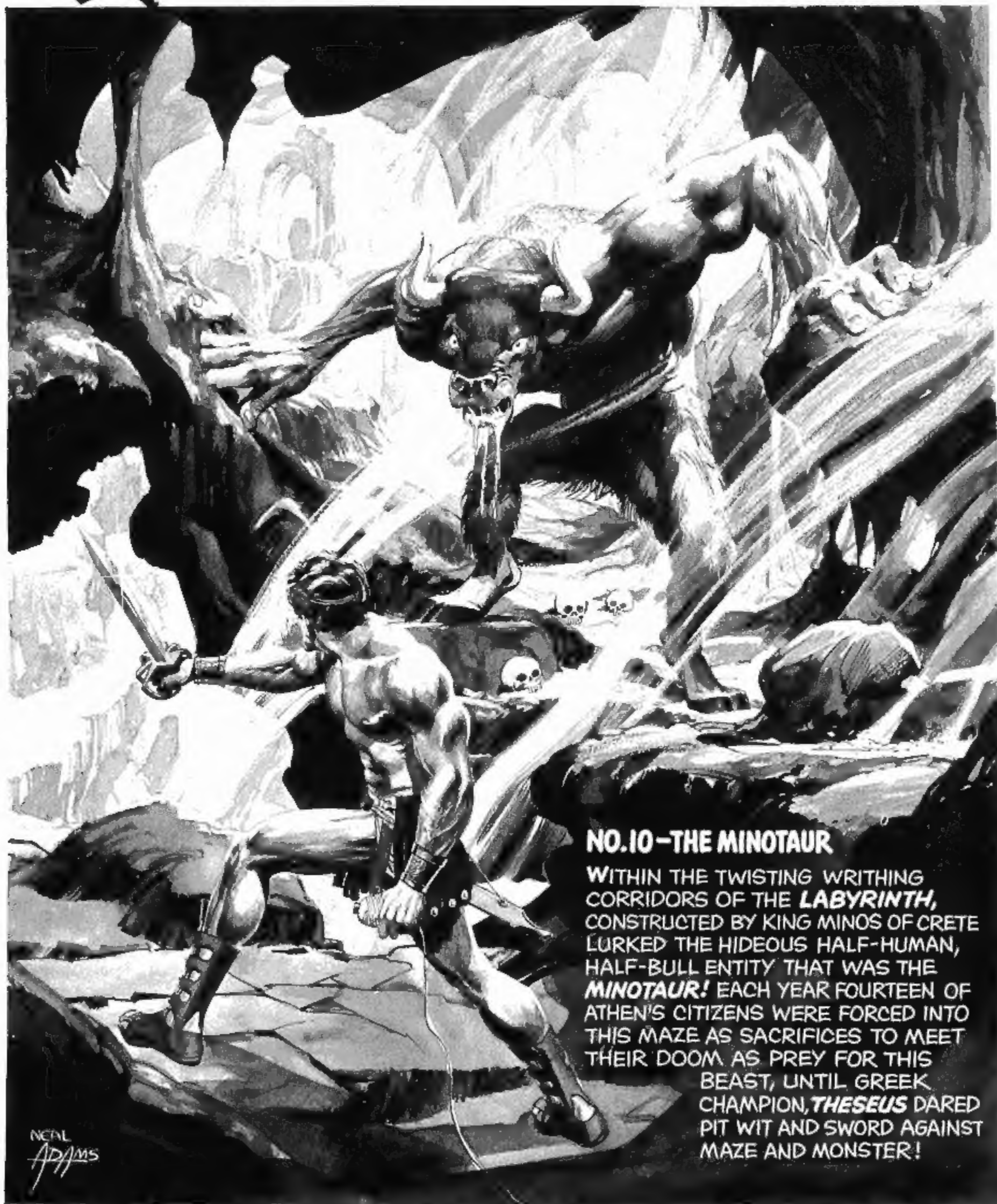
ART BY ROY G. KRENKEL





MONSTER MASTERPIECE TIME FOR ALL YOU PATRONS OF THE PULSATING, AS ONCE AGAIN WE UNVEIL ANOTHER TERRIFYING TIDBIT IN...

## EERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY!



### NO.10—THE MINOTAUR

WITHIN THE TWISTING WRITHING CORRIDORS OF THE **LABYRINTH**, CONSTRUCTED BY KING MINOS OF CRETE LURKED THE HIDEOUS HALF-HUMAN, HALF-BULL ENTITY THAT WAS THE **MINOTAUR**! EACH YEAR FOURTEEN OF ATHEN'S CITIZENS WERE FORCED INTO THIS MAZE AS SACRIFICES TO MEET THEIR DOOM AS PREY FOR THIS BEAST, UNTIL GREEK CHAMPION, **THESEUS** DARED PIT WIT AND SWORD AGAINST MAZE AND MONSTER!

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